





**An investigation of Gullveig in Old Norse mythology
& her anti-cosmic nexus**

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By Vexior, 218

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Gullveigarbók

*An investigation of Gullveig in Old Norse mythology
& her anti-cosmic nexus*

GULLVEIG EMBRACED IN

The Sagas, Witchcraft & Poetry

EMBELLISHED WITH

Symbolical Norse Illustrations

TOGETHER WITH

an illumination on the Old Norse belief in the adverse powers of the underworld. And an elaborate study and view upon the underworld as a primordial source of the anti-cosmic current.

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GULLVEIGARBÓK

By Vexior

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All Old Norse references translated into English by Vexior, mostly from Bugge's edition of Sæmundar Edda, and Heimskringla. The author would like to give credit to Heimskringla which has advanced and nourished his profound research in rare ON literature.

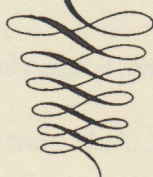
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Table of contents



Explanatory	11
Introduction	14
I: I Sögum	28
Gullveig In Aldna	32
Gullveig's Misinterpretation as Freyja	41
Gullveig, the Wolves and Werewolves' Ancestress & Fosterer	47
Gullveig's Brother Hrossbjófr	49
Heiðr	50
Aurboða	56
Angrboða	61
Hyrrokin	67
A Sæmundar Edda-Study on Gullveig	71
A Snorra Edda-Study on Gullveig	85
Undirheimar	88
Hel – In Svarta	97
The Offspring	109
Fenrir	110
Jörmungandr	114
Hati, Sköll, and Garmr	116
Gullveig and Lilith	117
Járnviðr	124
Kennings and Meanings	133
Gullveig and Loki	148
The Death of Baldr	170
II: Fjölkyngi	184
Blót	189
Seta	193
Vitt	196
Gullveigar Rúnar	197
III: Ljóð	210
Hennar	213
Ýblótrúnaz	215
The Old Will Climb	217
Gránautr	219
Áma	221
Skassleikr	223
Appendix	227
Index	234

List of illustrations

Plate I: <i>Gullveig, Heiðr, and Aurboða ascend from Niflheimr</i>	30
Plate II: <i>Gullveig as the rime-thurs crone Heiðr</i>	35
Plate III: <i>Loki finds Gullveig's Heart</i>	39
Plate IV: <i>Angrboða</i>	63
Plate V: <i>Hyrrokin</i>	70
Plate VI: <i>Loki comes loose</i>	168
Plate VII: <i>Heldrasill</i>	229
Plate VIII: <i>Chaos' acosmic current</i>	232

ABBREVIATIONS

AD	anno Domini
BC	before Christ
Bo	Old Norse, and so forth
Eg	for example, such as
Et	that is
OE	Old English
OI	Old Icelandic
ON	Old Norse, i.e. Old Scandinavian; Scandinavian which for me includes Iceland

I would also like to explain some of the spelling words that I use in this book. Some of them may be seen as unusual and odd, but the reason why I choose these words is that they are as close as I can get to the Old Norse words and so make for a better fit. Take for example the English word "near". I derived from the Old Norse word *frán*. Especially the Old Norse words for "near" and "where" I have explained this "where" (þá, thence, why, whence) and "where" (þar, where). In this manner, I can use the more pure form "near" instead of "frán" or "where" although they mean the same.

Explanatory

PRONUNCIATION KEYS

þ (Þ) - as in *thin*

ð (Ð) - as in *this*

æ (Æ) & ä (Ä) - as in *cat*. An accent denoting a longer syllable (æ̃).

ø (Ø) & ö (Ö) - close to *her*. An accent denoting a longer syllable (ø̃).

In early Scandinavia the letter o was frequently used for a slightly different ø-sound, but it was replaced with the character ø during the early medieval age. Normally I am very picky with keeping to the original spellings and such, but due to their similarities and mix-ups I have chosen to replace the character o with the ø in this book.

ABBREVIATIONS

AD anno domini

BC before Christ

Etc. and others; and so forth

E.g. for example, such as

I.e. that is

OE Old English

OI Old Icelandic

ON Old Norse; i.e. Old Scandinavian; Scandinavia which for me includes Iceland.

I would also like to explain some of the chosen words that I use in this book. Some of them may be seen as unusual and old, but the reason why I chose these words is that they often etymologize with the Old Norse words and so make for a better fit. Take for example the English word “rime”; it derives from the Old Norse word *hrím*. Equally, the Old Norse words for giant *þurs* and *jötunn* I have anglicized into “thurs” (pl. thurses, adj. thursian) and “jotun” (pl. jotuns). In this manner, I can use the more pure form “rime-thurs” instead of “frost giant” – although they mean the same

thing. Furthermore, I use the Old Norse names in their original approach only, since those are the true names and I think that renaming them just to make it easier for foreigners to pronounce and remember them is to patronize people and mock the giants.

In my book I will use the name Hel *only* for the giantess who rules over the dead and Niflheimr, Gullveig's daughter with Loki. And I will *only* use the name Helheimr for the world of the dead in the underworld (which is otherwise commonly called only Hel). I do this to avoid unnecessary confusion in an already confusing and complex subject.

I would also like to explain my understanding of the difference between a thurs-giant and a jotun-giant. In my profound studies of the ON mythology the *thurses* from Múspellzheimr and Niflheimr are the *only* ones who are malignant and adversaries; as Múspellzheimr and Niflheimr are located *beyond* the underworld in Chaos. All other giants, e.g. jotuns (*jötnar*) and mountain-giants (*bergrisar*), belong to the underworld and are most often mythological allies with the *vanir* and *ásir*-gods. An example of this can be seen in the ON term *hrím-* which only belongs to the coldness and darkness of Niflheimr, Hvergelmir, and its powers; as the rime-thurses are always of three important elements: 1) Ice, 2) Darkness, and 3) Aversion. And as *hrím-* is exclusively associated with *nifl-*, the two have adopted each other's traits.

In *Gylfaginning* it is told that Auðhumla licked on the salty ice until Búri was excavated. This was before the world and the *ásir* were yet created, there were only primordial entities; according to *Gylfaginning* there only existed Ýmir the rime-giant and Auðhumla the cow. *Gylfaginning* is the only source that testifies to Auðhumla's involvement in the creation. However, taken from *Gylfaginning's* words, the *ásir*-gods came from the line of Auðhumla's race (Búri was her first son, and he is Óðinn's grandfather), and the adverse and primordial giants came from Ýmir, hence the thurses. And *Gylfaginning* speaks of this adverse thurs-race in the line of Ýmir: "We do not acknowledge him (Ýmir) god; he was evil and all his kindred. We call them rime-thurses." So the *purs*-race was malevolent and adverse towards the creation. And the *jötunn*-race was seen as benevolent; as the *jötunn*-race was in time more adapted to the creation, and later became allies with the *ásir* and *vanir*.

Cleasby and Vigfusson separate the race *pursar* from *Jötnar* in *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*: "the Titans of the Scand. Mythology were so called, as opposed to and older than the common Jötnar (Giants)."

Skírnismál, stanza 34, says: «*Heyri jötnar, heyri hrímþursar, synir Suttungs, sjalfir áslíðar*», which for me obviously categorizes and divides the races perfectly in:

1. *jötnar* = giants of the underworld
2. *hrímþursar* = giants of Niflheimr
3. *synir Suttungs* = giants of Múspellzheimr
4. *sjalfir áslíðar* = the *ásir*

Gylfaginning (21, 42, and 49) separates them as «*hrímþursar ok bergrisar*»; why do this three times if there was no difference between them?

Bósa saga ok Herrauds says: «*Tröll ok álfar ok töfrnornir, búar, bergrisar brenni þínar hallir, hati þik hrímþursar, hestar streði þik, stráin stangi þik, en stormar æri þik, ok vei verði þér, nema þú vilja minn gerir*». Not too far from how the *Gylfaginning* saga separates them.



Introduction



This is my Gullveig-studies and understanding thus far – many more
arcana will henceforth be solved, new knowledge will be
absorbed, and numerous more riddles will be
unraveled. This work can never be com-
pleted, so consider this book a glimpse
into my boundless devotion
to Gullveig.

*

The investigation of a dead religion from the past in the present is a challenge that craves a sober and realistic perspective in its analysis. The challenge is not just to understand the deep metaphors in the Old terminology and big gaps in the limited literature and archeological evidences; it is to understand the Old Norse peoples' perspective of the physical world and the spiritual. Through all these years of my researching, I have found that it is too easy to build a modern understanding of the Old, instead of trying to think like a poor farmer in Scandinavia during, for example, 300 AD. That said, it might even be better to look upon the Old Norse belief from a modern perspective; it might allow us to reach a deeper understanding: because our research conceives and manifests the past in the present. And as we do so – evoking what is dead and putting it on paper – we analyze the facts and try to put it together in the best way we see fit. Some researchers follow the pack – me, I spread my wings and face the head wind like the black dragon.

JÖTUNHEIMR AND ANTI-COSMIC GINNUNGAGAP-THEORY

I would like to start by giving an illumination on my way of beholding the giants (*þurs* and *jötunn*) and their dark powers in the Old Norse mythology and magic. I also want to start this book by explaining briefly the foundation of my belief, so as to make it easier to understand my vision of the Old Norse mythology and religion, which I devotedly follow. Chaos-Gnosticism is the innards of my belief, so is anti-cosmic Satanism. Chaos-Gnosticism is inspired by the ancient religion called Gnosticism which was built on the belief that the cosmic demiurge – who in different religions is called Yahweh, God, Zeus, Óðinn, etc. – is the evil god in the material creation of the cosmos. The light that the demiurge is distributing is a false and unclean light – a metaphor for a lie and an illusion – and the demiurge is more of a tyrant than a savior. In Chaos-Gnosticism the Satanist adopts the fundamental roots of Gnosticism and fuses it together with the belief in an acosmic Chaos – i.e. a “state” called Chaos *beyond* the cosmos, a “state” which I believe is an acosmic pan-dimensional multiverse. Thus, the cosmic demiurge is an evil god who enslaves souls and imprisons them so that they become nothing more than a shell of clay; blind and unenlightened, while the true light bringer, Lucifer-Loki-Prometheus¹, is the savior who will enlighten you with the authentic light, and guide you out of the shackles of the demiurge to finally transcend unto the acosmic Chaos. The anti-cosmic Chaos-powers are thus seen as the destroyers of causal structures and cosmic bonds. This is how I transfer the anti-cosmic purposes and essence onto the thurses, as the thurs-powers are told in the ON sagas to be destroyers; they come out of Ginnungagap which dwells in Chaos, and evidently they are the wrathful powers who relentlessly aim to destroy the worlds of the *vanir*; Miðgarðr-earth, and *ásir*; Ásgarðr-heaven. With a Chaosophic perspective it's not hard to understand the nexus.

¹ Prometheus and Loki's mythos are very much in analogy: light-bringers and punished in the same way by the demiurge.

² Hypothetically an original understanding of this epithet could have been the void of the Chaos-powers.

THE CREATION AND THE INVASION

Ginnungagap² is the infinite abyss beyond the cosmos, where the everlasting darkness dwells. This primordial abyss is the pan-dimensional Chaos, which has a limitless quantity of time and space dimensions and it is where everything within and throughout the cosmos originally comes from. Ginnungagap is a formless eternity because of its pan-dimensions and multi-potential traits. And because of its acausal nature it is not bound by the limitations of the causal law, and thereby it is a lawless

totality that, without restrictions, is continually evolving: the eternally dynamic infinitude. The ON prefix *ginn-* and the Greek word *khaos* both derive from the same stem: the Sanskrit word *ghen*, which means emptiness and abyss. This is vital information for us in understanding how the ON people looked upon the creation and where it came from.

¹ Normally translated into "a yawning gap".

Gap var ginnunga¹

Ginnungagap, as Chaos, held *all*; which even included the opportunity for cosmic forces to take form. In *Völuspá* it is told:

In the very beginning when nothing was, nor sand nor sea, nor cold waves;
earth was not, nor upper-heaven, a yawning gap, grass was not.

It started with a threefold of structural forces:

1) The *cold* in the form of the world of ice, mists, and darkness called Niflheimr, and its rime-well Hvergelmir, they were located in the north; in a place where exploding ice-masses ruled the lands; and roaring crackling gigantic ice-bergs filled its black waters. And from the bottomless rime-well springs the black poisonous waters called Élivágar which divides into eleven rivers called Svøl, Gunnþrá, Fjorm, Fimbulþul, Slíðr and Hríð, Sylgr and Ylgr, Við, Leiptr and Gjöll. And so, immense dense fog was created from these waters; hence the world in the north was called Nifl or Niflheimr. And the ruler of this cold world is the giantess Hel.

2) In the south, *heat* was created and its flaming surroundings were called Múspell or Múspellzheimr – the world of fire and light. It is also the home of the world-destroyers called the *Múspells synir*, sons of Múspell, and *Suttungs synir*, sons of Suttungr. And the ruler of this flaming world is the almighty thurs called *the black one* and *the one with a burning sword*, Surtr. In *Völuspá* 52 it is told:

Surtr fares from the south with incinerating flames,
the warrior's sword shines like the sun;
rocks rumble and clash; fiends reel;
dead men tread Helvegr and heaven is cloven.

3) After the world of ice and the world of fire grew so big that they met together, the heat melted the ice and created yeasty poisonous waters, which have been called *kvikudropar*, life-drops – supposedly the seed of the spirit. And existence in the form

of the Chaos-thurs Ýmir (also called Aurgelmir by the rime-thurses) was created; he was deformed¹ with four mouths and he was gigantic compared to normal thurses. In *Vafþrúðnismál* it is told:

Out of Élivágar venom-drops spattered, growing until a giant was;
thence are our kindred come all together, so it is they are malignant forever.

In *Vafþrúðnismál* it is also told:

Under the hand on the giant rime-thurs grew maid and man together:
one foot with the other bore, for the wise thurs, a six-headed son.

In *Gylfaginning* it is told:

By no means do we acknowledge him (Ýmir) god; he was evil and all his kindred: we call them rimethurses. Now it is said that when he slept, a sweat came upon him, and there grew under his left hand a man and a woman, and one of his feet begat a son with the other; and thus the races are come; these are the rimethurses. The old rimethurs, him we call Ýmir.

Out of Ýmir's left hand² a male thurs and a female thurs were created, and they were not spoken of more in the mythology other than that they were the first ancestors of the thurs-races – they are but a mystery³. But Ýmir's third offspring, which he gave birth to with his feet, was spoken of as Þrúðgelmir; he was a deformed and wrathful six-headed thurs – who in his turn gave birth on his own, like his father did, to a horrible thurs called Bergelmir.

Something that should also be considered is that according to the *Gylfaginning*-saga, *Vafþrúðnismál*, *Grímnismál*, and *Völuspá in skamma* Ýmir also gave birth to Mímir and his sister Beizla. Since they are also both giants, it is self-explanatory in this early stage of the creation that all giants come from Ýmir.

THE LINE OF THURSES

On each side of the gaping chasm called Ginnungagap two worlds lay, in the south there was the world of flames which

¹ As form as in the shape of a human belonged to the *ásir*-gods; *litir goða*, not to the giants. The giants were connected to the ON saying *skipta litum*, to change 'form'.

² *Þá óx undir vinstri hönd honum maður og kona. Gylfaginning.*

³ First, I claim that they were thurses just like Ýmir was. He was a pure rime-thurs, so his offspring must be rime-thurses as well, just like Þrúðgelmir. And secondly, my most credible guess of whom these two mysterious rime-thurses given by Ýmir by his left hand (!) would be Gullveig and Loki; due to the known thursian genealogy. And the flames of Surtr or Múspellzheimr affected Loki's entity.

was called Múspellzheimr, and in the north a world of mists, darkness and ice which was called Niflheimr. And as immense Múspell-flames reached out to the outer rim of Niflheimr, an oozing icy sludge started to break free in dense mists from ages of crystallized stagnation. Black ice turned into sludgy water because of the heat and as it invaded the cosmos, it was allegorized to be as poisonous as an alien and anti-cosmic power, thus its definition 'thursian power' or in ON *pursamegin*. And from the icy sludge of the poisonous waters an abysmal water-well was created, and it was called Hvergelmir – father of all rivers. When the Múspell-flames collided with the Nifl-ice another phenomenon took place: the first rime-thurs was born out of the black ice. He was called Ýmir, and the rime-thurses called him Aurgelmir. He can easily be seen as the Chaos-current which is invading the cosmos. Ýmir created the giant race called *purs* by himself. The first mentioned race was rime-thurses after their father Aurgelmir, and they were all evil in essence, attributes and manifestations, and most often deformed in appearance. The thursian race would become eternal enemies with the *ásir* and the *vanir*: adversaries to the new and definite realm of the cosmos – hence their adjectival umbrella term “anti-cosmic”. Other races were created in the beginning, although later, after the thurs-race had grown strong; one of the later races was called jotun, which was in time more adapted to the cosmic realm and adjusted very well, and later they became allies with the new non-giant races called *ásir* and *vanir*. The jotun-race was seen as a benevolent one. The *ásir* sprung from the same source as the jotun-race, and they all were created much later in time than the thurses.

If the giants come from the rime-thurs Ýmir and Niflheimr with their poisonous essence, how come there are benign giants that are even friends and allies with the *ásir*? The most common answer to this that I've come across is that the ON mythology and religion were not “dualistic” or “monotheistic”, that “all was inspirited with both the dark and the light”, there were simply “no sides”; “no good and evil”. Hypotheses which in my opinion are incorrect, as *Gylfaginning* says in plain words: *he (Ýmir) was evil and all his kindred* (the rime-thurses). And even *Sæmundar Edda's* old saga *Völuspá* allegorizes Gullveig as an evil and adverse giantess; and what about Surtr, Niðhöggr, Þjazi and Hrímgæðr, for example? They are all antagonists and adversaries to the gods and the world. Another problem that misleads and obscures

things is that the ON word *jötunn* is used for all giants; e.g. in *hrímkalda jotun*; an epithet for a rime-thurs and not a jotun. Still, according to me, Ýmir and his race are of an acosmic and opposing heritage (from Chaos) in comparison to the cosmos; «*hann var illur og allir hans ættmenn, þá köllum vér hrímpursa*»¹.

¹ "He was evil and all his kindred: we call them rime-thurses." *Gylfaginning* 5.

According to my studies, it is clear that thurses from Múspellzheimr and Niflheimr are the *only* malignant ones. All other giants who exist outside the two above-mentioned worlds belong to the underworld instead of beyond it, and are allies with the gods. Let me take Nifl as an example; why is it that *only* thurses are associated with rime (ON *hrím*), as in *hrímburs*? Never have the epithets *hrímjötunn* or *hrímáss* ever been used in the ON sagas. The ON term *hrím*- only belongs to the coldness and darkness of Niflheimr, Hvergelmir, and its powers; as the rime-thurses are always of three important elements, 1) Ice, 2) Darkness, and 3) Aversion¹. If you take a look at the ON prefix *hrím*-, it can also mean soot black, which remains for example in the Icelandic word *hrímugur*, sooty, and it might be connected to the infamous darkness of Niflheimr, and in fact that Hel the giantess; ruler of Niflheimr, was seen as a black hue².

As *hrím*- has been exclusively associated with *Nifl*-, in my opinion both have adopted each other's meanings. ON *nifl* derives from the Old High German *nibul*, German *nebel*, Latin *nebula*, with the meaning of fog, mist, and darkness. Cleasby and Vigfusson strengthen my argument that *bursar* are a separate race from *jotnar*, if you look under *hrímburs* in *An Icelandic-English Dictionary* they say: "*the Titans of the Scandin. Mythology were so called, as opposed to and older than the common Jötnar (Giants).*" And in *Skírnismál*, stanza 34, I think it shows a perfect example of that there was a difference between *jotnar* and *bursar*: «*Heyri jotnar, heyri hrímbursar, synir Suttungs, sjalfir áslíðar*», "hear me jotuns, hear me rime-thurses, sons of Suttungr, and all the gods".

¹ Aversion towards the creation or the cosmos, or if you like the world-tree (Yggdrasill) and its beneficiaries (that is to say all life).

² I think *Skírnismál* 35 confirms this with the line «*Hrímgrímnir heitir þurs, er þik hafa skal fyr nágrindr neðan*», "the thurs is called *Hrímgrímnir* who you shall belong to far below the 'corpse-gate'; as it refers to a threat of something terrible.

³ *Gylfaginning* is the only source that has saved the myth of Auðhumla's involvement in the creation.

⁴ "She licked the salty ice-blocks, and the first day that she licked the blocks, there came forth from the blocks in the evening a man's hair; the second day, a man's head; the third day the whole man was there. He is named *Búri*." *Gylfaginning* 6.

THE LIGHT BECOMES FALSE

In *Gylfaginning* it is told that Auðhumla³ licked on the salty ice until *Búri* was excavated: «*Hún sleikti hrímsteinana er saltir voru. Og hinn fyrsta dag er hún sleikti steina kom úr steininum að kveldi mannshár, annan dag mannshöfuð, þriðja dag var þar allur maður. Sá er nefndur Búri*»⁴. I understand this as, taken from its exact words, the *ásir* (gods) came from a line of Auðhumla's race (*Búri* was her first son, and he is *Óðinn*'s grandfather), and the adverse and primordial giants came from *Ýmir*. *Gylfaginning* says: "We do not acknowledge him (*Ýmir*) god; he was evil and all his

kindred. We call them rime-thurses". These lines actually say that his evil kindred are called rime-thurses *only*, not «*hrímbursar ok bergrisar*», rime-thurses and mountain-giants, as in other places in *Gylfaginning*.

Now Surtr and his offspring were the thursian rulers of the south, and Prúðgelmir and his offspring were the rime-thursian rulers of the north. These sources gave the opportunity for the cosmos to be created, and in time the jotun-family of the jotun Búri¹ became more adapted to the cosmic forms and laws, which in the long run

formed the new races called *vanir* and *ásir*. The ruler of this family had the demiurgical place as a god and was born with the purpose of being the cosmic head representation and creator of form, laws, and the worlds. He was named Óðinn – and called by many other names: Allvísi, Valfaðir, and Herfaðir – and he had two brothers who would help him create a world fitting to the cosmic nature, which of course could not be as lawless and pan-dimensional as Chaos (this can be compared to the mythological saga of Tiamat and Marduk, where Tiamat is connected to water.) Structure, law and form were the foundations of his idea. So a demiurge he became²; Óðinn the god of heaven, the tyrant, and his two brothers, Høinir and Loðurr, the triad which has been explained by Snorri to represent spirit, soul and flesh. However, from the primordial sources – Múspell and Nifl – came the true light and the true knowledge, which in other traditions are called gnosis. This knowledge was the pure understanding from the world beyond the cosmos. *Gylfaginning* says, “first was the world in south, which was named Múspell; it is light and hot; the region is glowing and burning, and impenetrable to outlanders and have not their holdings there.” Nifl has similar traits but it is cold and dark; it emanates poisonous icy waters instead of flaming light. It’s a place that is explained in the ON sagas as not being available to the *ásir*-gods; the gods could not see it, nor reach it. It was there where Þjazi and his thursian brothers would move their smithy

and home to – in the northern wintry lands where no god could approach them. It is the opposing and wrathful place (i.e. adverse towards the cosmos) of thursian powers only, and the light that shines from it is not the light of a cosmic sun, it is the light of acosmic knowledge and languages of Chaos. It invades the cosmos with something the Old Norse people called *eitr*; poison. And its current is metaphorically described as “poisonous rivers” coming out of underworldly wells. The original

¹ It is a mystery what he actually was, but in my book Búri is a giant.

² «*Ok fyrir því má hann heita Alföðr, at hann er faðir allra goðanna ok manna ok alls þess, er af honum ok hans krafti var fullgert*», "And by this he must be called All-father: because he is father of all the gods and of men, and of all that was fulfilled by him and by his might." *Gylfaginning* 9.

³ Ýmir, also called Aurgelmir, is in my opinion a representation of the power-flow called “poisonous rivers” moving from acosmic realms into the cosmos. His name Aurgelmir means *aur-* “(watery) mud” or “humus”, and *-gelmir* is translated into “stormy waves”. This name actually hints as to Ýmir’s nature. With earth being a symbol of “bringing into cosmic life”, you could here see the connection between the womb called Ginungagap and Aurgelmir – one being the womb, the other being the extractions from it.

well is called Hvergelmir, father of wells, and its shore is called Élivágar³, and Élivágar itself is divided into eleven rivers which are all the main sources of the acosmic light transformed into anti-cosmic light, and since *acosmic* light can *only* exist beyond the cosmos, it has to change when it penetrates the cosmos, which in turn are translated as the *Hidden Knowledge of Chaos*¹. All the thurses and other giants are the wielders of this hidden light. A human recipient of this hidden knowledge in Old Scandinavia was called *fjolkunnigr*, one skilled in the black arts (from *fjolkyngr*, black art); a word that I believe derives from the same root as the rune *kyn* (𐌺) – *kunna*; which in its turn derives from the Greek word *gnosis* (see further down for a thorough explanation). A *fjolkunnigr* could also be called a *seiðberandi* – *seiðberendr* (pl.), sorcerer(s) or carrier(s) of *seiðr*. And *Völuspá in skamma* says: «*seiðberendr frá Svarthöfða*», "all *seiðhberendr* come from Surtr".

Now, Óðinn is put in the sagas as the all wise-one, he is upheld as the demiurgic god who is the creator and ruler of all (the cosmos). This has been a bit misunderstood over time, and twisted more and more into the form of a monotheistic religious axiom. From the early times it is proven that the ON mythology and religion were polytheistic in nature and the different worlds had different rulers, not one ruler of all as it is often confusedly stated. This twist is an influence of monotheistic religions as Christianity, and as Christianity came to Scandinavia during the times when the *Eddas* were collected and transcribed into new documents, they were naturally influenced by it². Óðinn has always been looked upon as the all-wise and a ruler of Ásgarðr, Valhøll, and even Miðgarðr, but only the worlds of the gods and the humans, not the world of the giants or the world of the dead. Here is where the confusion appears, people tend to prioritize only two worlds in the ON cosmology and that Óðinn therefore is ruler of all, but they put the whole underworld aside and they definitely do not care about the realm called Útgarðr. For example, Surtr is the mighty sovereign of Múspelheimr, and Hel is queen-ruler of Niflheimr and the dead in the underworld through Helheimr – this proves that the ON belief-system is based on polytheism. Óðinn has been called "god of the dead" though, but that is, by fact, because the sagas say that all human warriors who die in battle will be sent to Óðinn's halls and join his heavenly armies in Valhøll. It has nothing to do with the underworldly realm called Helheimr, which is the leading world of the dead.

¹ The ON people did not have the word "chaos" as what we know of, but *ginn*- in *Ginnungagap* can actually be looked upon as the ON word for Chaos, as the ON word *ginn* and the Hellenic word *khaos* derives from the same Sanskrit stem *ghen*, void; and the ON people did believe in the same so-called "void" or "space of emptiness" where *Ginnungagap* once emerged from. The theoretical sources of the poisonous waters beyond the underworldly wells, Útgarðr and Ginnungagap, justify this.

² Snorri forced Óðinn into becoming some sort of a monotheistic god, which is not historically correct. Óðinn was a demiurge and ruler of Ásgarðr and Valhøll, but he was not a singular tyrant over all worlds in the original mythology. See further down.

Mythological information and remnants that lead us to the fact that Óðinn was not the wisest entity in the cosmos can be found, for example, in the saga called *Vafþrúðnismál*, in the *Edda* where Óðinn himself recognizes the giant Vafþrúðnir¹ to be the all-wise one. Óðinn uses these words exactly in the saga: «*inn alsvinna jotun*», "the all-wise giant", as he explains to his wife how excited he is to meet this giant. Óðinn goes to this giant in search for more *hidden* knowledge, and he also intends to test the giant's wisdom, and it ends up that the giant can richly answer all

Óðinn's questions, as Óðinn repeatedly praises the giant as being all-wise. If Óðinn already knew everything, as his epithet Allvisi suggests, the visit of Vafþrúðnir would be pointless, and Óðinn would not have uttered his excitement over this interview to his wife. The sagas are in fact full of these small hints that contradict Óðinn's, and other *æsir*'s, absolute wisdom and power over the thurses. The question is who chooses to read them.

Here you can tell by reading *Gylfaginning* that Snorri "forced" Óðinn to become All-Father, by using compelling intentions in sentences like "And this is my belief, that Óðinn and his brothers, must be rulers of heaven and earth. And he must be so called. So is that man called whom we know to be mightiest and most worthy of honor, and let him be so called."² This way of compelling the reader to choose a side reminds me of Christian authorship and approach, and Snorri, who was one of the ON authors behind the writing and collecting of the ON mythology, was a Christian.

*

¹ Vafþrúðnir is supposedly translated to wise in riddles. But my own research shows that the translation *the powerful entangler* would be a more fitting translation. The two translations are not too far from each other, but to use the word "riddle" is limiting Vafþrúðnir's qualities to just riddles when that is not the actual case.

² *Gylfaginning*.

³ Also called *Sæmundar Edda* and the *Elder Edda*.

⁴ Also called *Snorra Edda* and the *Younger Edda*.

⁵ Throughout this book I have added the adjective "black" to the thursian magic, runes, and powers, as their essence derives from "the black ones"; namely Surtr, *Svarhøfði*, Hel, *In Svarta*, and Gullveig.

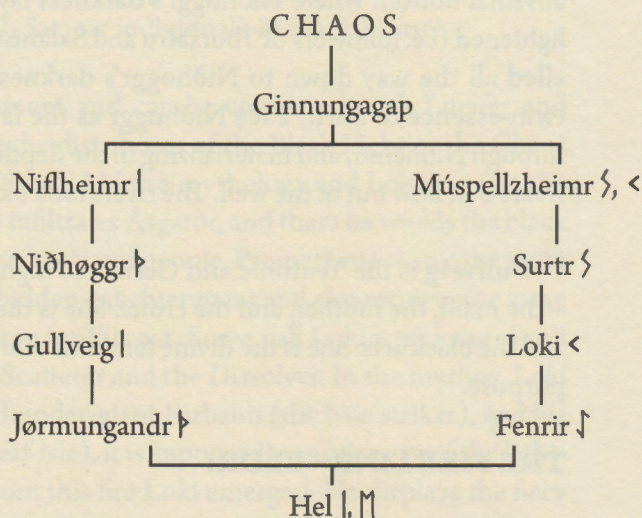
Before I dive into my Gullveig-investigations I feel I have to mention something about the view upon the Old Norse sagas, especially the *Poetic Edda*³ and the *Prose Edda*⁴. How they were tampered with by poets who lived off their poetry and performance, and diminished into pleasant tales for kings' courts and farm-families' amusement during long cold and dark winters. The original sagas and the dark aspects of the Chaos-creatures such as troll, giants and their black magic⁵ is cut out purposely, in the knowledge that nobody would hire a poet to tell such horrid sagas. But the converting religious mass did not wipe out all traces and left us with small details that can today verify the belief and evocation of underworld powers; Tolley confirms this: "The term *troll* was used of giants and other beings that were involved

in malicious supernatural activities, and came to be applied not only to the object of this magic, but also to the practitioner (so that it sometimes becomes synonymous with witch). It is clear that *troll* could be summoned in ritual magic, presumably to impart information, but perhaps also to carry out tasks, as this is explicitly condemned in Norwegian laws («*at vekja troll up*», "to wake up troll")."¹ Snorri was Christian and deliberately took out the dark glorifications and even added many Christian aspects to the old sagas. Even the episode about the new born lovely world of the gods after Ragna Røk in the *Edda* has very strong similarities with the *Bible's* tale of the apocalypse and the rebirth of the new world with Jesus (Baldr) in it, which I personally suspect to have been just a Christian influence. Remember that the *Sæmundar Edda* (the *Elder Edda* is looked upon as the most accurate and credible version of our Old mythology and religion) was a collection of hand-written sagas most likely found in Norway and on Iceland sometimes during the years 800-1000 AD, but hand-transcribed to the book *Codex Regius* sometime during 1200-1300 AD; and it is from this majestic book the today's *Edda* (*Sæmundar Edda*) comes from. How accurate the transcription is I do not dare to guess, knowing that Scandinavia was Christianized around 1000-1100 AD, which makes me wonder if Christians were the ones making this transcription. Certainly, they were the ones that were *versed in the scriptures*. And all this after clearly putting in the complex saga about Ragna Røk that Surtr took his burning sword and burned all of the worlds and all within them. But the fact is, Ragna Røk *does* mean *the end of the gods*, which seems to have been ignored and forgotten.

¹ Clive Tolley, 2009, *Shamanism in Norse Myth and Magic*.

THE GERMANIC ANALOGUE PURPOSE

This is a short map of the analogies between the primordial thurs-powers and their analogue purpose. This is my own hypothesis made from an intense study of the Old Norse mythology, and it is one of the foundations of my work.



THE ICE LINE – ÍSS:

The |-rune stands for the rime and ice elements connected to these powers, and the þ-rune connected to Niflheimr stands for the spreading of the thursian powers, the *eittr*, through Hvergelmir. But *eittr* is an outcome of both Nifl and Múspell, as the |-rune represents the Nifl, the <-rune represents the Múspell, and the þ-rune represents (the outcome) of them both as in the *eittr*. And if you bind | and < together as a bind-rune you will get the þ-rune.

Niflheimr is the world of mists, ice and darkness, and the source of the thursian essence: this is because the well Hvergelmir is located in Niflheimr, and Hvergelmir is the main source of the *poisonous waters* from Élivágar. Élivágar means the *icy waves* and its name is an allegory of its icy source; *él* means ice/rime in Old Norse. And

¹ That's why I believe Yggdrasill to be a Yew-tree, because Yew carries poison, *eittr*, while Ash does not.

Élivágar in turn is split up into eleven rivers, which are spreading throughout the underworld and feeding all kinds of powers. They are even feeding its poison to the roots of the world tree so that it rots and dies from within, and thus everything and everyone that the tree nourishes.¹

Niðhöggr is the primitive Chaos-spawn who dwells in the depths of Hvergelmir recreating himself into legions. He is the transcendent thursian power and the mirror-image of the acosmic Chaos power. He is a black wrathful dragon who feeds on human corpses, humans who have died through all the underworlds down to the abysmal bottom where Niðhöggr's darkness lays. This could be seen as those enlightened (i.e. followers of Thursatru and Satanists) who have by their own will travelled all the way down to Niðhöggr's darkness and been embraced by it. As a twin-essence to Surtr, I see Niðhöggr as the lava running out of Múspellzheimr through Niflheimr, and materializing in the depths of Hvergelmir into the poisonous rivers that flow out of the well. The rivers look like serpents; the brood of Niðhöggr.

Gullveig is the Teutonic and Germanic highest feminine principle of darkness – the maid, the mother, and the crone. She is the sinister arch-mother of the giants and the black arts. She is the divine feminine manifestation of the analogue thursian purpose.

THE FIRE LINE – ELDR:

The ʝ-rune stands for the destructive aspect of fire, and the <-rune stands for the enlightenment of the divine fire, as in *gnosis*.

Múspellzheimr is the world of fire, the foundation of the destructive and enlightening flames¹ – its fires are variously referred to in ON as *múspell*, *hyrr*, *eimr*, and *eldr*. *Múspellzheimr*'s ruler is *Surtr* and his sons are called *suttungar* and *eldandar*. Its flames activated the *black poison* of *Niflheimr*'s ice and sent it on its way as allegorized poisonous waters; here a connection with the *Nifl*-mists might be found. The thursian elements of *Múspellzheimr* and *Niflheimr* were thereby unleashed from a dormant status. Out of these horrible powers something equally horrible was unleashed as well: first came the massive and overpowering giant called the black one; *Surtr* as the entity of the ever-incinerating force; then came the giant *Loki*, unlocked from the blazing flames with wrath and boundless intelligence. These very connected giants represent the very purpose of this fiery world.

¹ Incinerates your ego and enlightens your spirit.

² The Black Flame is corresponding to Chaos Gnosis; the Black Dragon; the Chaos Flame; Lucifer's Flame; Prometheus' Flame; Kingu's Blood, etc.

Surtr is the highest principle of the giant-race; he is somewhat of a parallel to Satan, they serve closely allied purposes.

Surtr is the pure manifestation of the destructive fire, his son has been called 'the red rooster' or 'the fire fiend', and *Surtr* himself has a burning *Múspell*-sword (*Gambanteinn*) – created by the cunning *Loki* and perfected by the evil *Pjazi* – which he will use to burn down everything within the cosmos. He dwells in the deep abyss beyond the underworld, in the world called *Múspellzheimr*, in a valley of darkness which is called *Sökkdalir* (the deep valleys). He is the pre-eminent anti-cosmic current emerging from the raging Chaos. He is the Chaos-Fires in *Múspellzheimr* personified in the ancient Scandinavian mythology. *Surtr* spews black light and flames which are the pure essences of each Satanic individual's lit Black Flame².

Loki is the giant of enlightenment and can be compared with Lucifer and Prometheus in the aspect of being the distributor of the Black Light or the Chaos Gnosis. They share this quality in the Old Norse mythology and *Loki* has also the same braveness as Lucifer when he infiltrates *Ásgarðr*, and there he wields the black poisons of *Hvergelmir* amongst *æsir*, *vanir* and people. Prometheus shares the same braveness in the act of bringing forbidden enlightenment and also receives the same punishment as *Loki* by the demiurge for this act. Some call *Loki* a trickster; I call him the Hero and the Locker, the Scatterer and the Dissolver. In the mythos, *Loki* was the son of the hurricane-and-thunder-giant *Fárbauti* (the bale striker), and his mother was the giantess *Laufey* (leaf-isle), it is supposedly an allegory of the lighting that set *Laufey* aflame, and from this fire *Loki* emerged. He displays the fiery character that eventually brings about *Surtr*'s destruction with fire of the worlds – this fire is called *múspilli*. And when it comes to *Loki*'s sly plans, he was always long

ahead, and he always formed them so that the most maleficent plans seemed to be the most beneficent and favourable; even the sword he called Gambanteinn – which he created for Surtr to destroy the worlds – was gladly treasured and claimed by the ásir for a while, unknowing of its anti-cosmic purpose. Wit, viciousness and bottomless spitefulness is coalesced in the essence of Loki.

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¹ Cleasby-Vigfusson, 1874, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*.

² Cleasby-Vigfusson, 1874, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*. Palm, 2004, *Vikingarnas Språk*, Heggstad, Hødnebo, Simensen, 2008, *Norrøn Ordbok*.

³ Hellquist, 1939, *Svensk Etymologisk Ordbok*.

⁴ Leijström Magnússon, 1943, *Isländsk-Svensk Ordbok*.

Cleasby-Vigfusson, 1874, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*.

I would also like to bring up the difference between Ragna Røk and Ragna Røkkr, which I think is relevant. First, the ON word *ragna* is formed from ON *røgn* (*regin*), and it was used by the Old Scandinavians as an umbrella term for “the gods as the makers and rulers of the universe.”¹ *Røk* is the older usage and it means fate or end², and the word *røkkr* derives from the Old Germanic word *rikwiz* which means darkness.³ *Rökkur* (*røkkr*, *røkr*) is still in usage today in the Icelandic language and it means darkness or dusk.⁴ The transformation from *røk* to *røkkr* in the meaning of Ragna Røk is probably an allegory and made during the middle ages. And this is why I have chosen to use exclusively the wording Ragna Røk in this book.

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VIKTOR RYDBERG

I would also want to mention Viktor Rydberg and his Old Norse studies, since he was one of the few that dared to look on the Old Norse mythology and see its dark and wrathful nature as well as it's good and calm. Rydberg allegorized the threatening thurses as much as mythologists through time have allegorized the *æsir*. He was discredited by many because he dared to challenge the mainstream of mythologists and scholars, and this is as typical as shocking. I would like to pay tribute to him and his amazing work on Old Norse mythology and religion called *Undersökningar i Germanisk Mythologi* 1886–1889; with this Rydberg – a mastermind – has inspire me in manifold ways.



I: I Søgum



*... uns þrjár kvámu þursa meyjar
ámáttkar mjök ór Jötunheimum.*



Gullveig : Heiðr : Aurboða¹

Heil Gullveig: heil gýgr seiðs ok svartra rúna.

Heil Gullveig: gýgr seiðsins.

Heil Gullveig, undir ok á jörðu: Heil Gullveig in vitra:

Gullveig: fyrst alin hrímþursinum Hrímní ok heitin þrjár hræðilegar þursameyjar:
þursamærin sem er ein ok þrjár: þrysvar brend: þrysvar borin: mæ'r ok félagi Loka:
vörðr ok dróttning Myrkviðar.

Heil Gullveig: Heil Gullveig með nœfnin Heiðr, Angrboða, Hyrrokin ok Aurboða:

Heil Gullveig in vitra:

Heil Gullveig in aldna:

¹ ΧΗΓΓΜΙΧ : ΗΜΠΛ : ΠΝΡΒΞΠΠ :



Gullveig In Aldna

GULLVEIG

First-born and first burnt; her death created Jormungandr.

The thursian race was black and wrathful in essence and will – abnormally formed because of their unnatural condition in the cosmos, like Ýmir himself. Some of these thurses had special purposes and extraordinary circumstances; two of them were Gullveig and Loki. They were both shape-shifters because of their multi-aspectual traits, and their powers went beyond those of regular thurses. Gullveig, *the Old One*, was the originator of magic and transformation, which made her into a very powerful giantess. This is why she could dwell amongst the *ásir*-gods without being detected as an intruder in Ásgarðr; she appeared as a goddess in form and essence, fooling even the demiurgic *áss* Óðinn in his own halls, though Gullveig's true essence (allegorized as a heart in the sagas) was made purely out of the poisonous black ice of Niflheimr, and Loki's out of the furious flames of Múspellzheimr. Their purpose was to lead all of the thursian races in bringing the cosmic existence to its

downfall; to infect the soul of the universe with the “poison” of Chaos and let it burn and dissolve from within. This is represented in the 𐌰-rune, which holds Gullveig’s rune 𐌰 and Loki’s rune 𐌰; and it is also represented in the 𐌵-rune, which is one of the sacred runes of Gullveig; it also holds the 𐌰-rune and the 𐌰-rune, both duplicated to strengthen their meanings and magic.

Gullveig was from the beginning known to be huge and terrible; as Angrboða she is known as the black formidable mother and crone, dwelling as the sole ruler in the atrocious dark woods from the underworld in Jötunheimr called Járnviðr, ironwood, mothering and spawning legions of deformed thursian wolves and werewolves. This is symbolized in the 𐌰-rune. And as Heiðr she is known as the black underworldly crone; giantess of the black anti-cosmic runes and magic, who comes at midnight up from under ground and walks between houses to visit the practitioners of the black arts (or *fielkunnigr*, as they were called), to teach them about the black runes and anti-cosmic magic. This is represented in the mysteries of the 𐌰-rune and the 𐌵-rune. She has been called “she, the old one”, “she, the wise one”, and “the three thurs-maids”. This is how *Völuspá* introduce Gullveig early in its foretelling:

...until the three thurs-maids came, very mighty maids, from the worlds
of the giants.

The *Edda* is one of the most important pre-Christian Scandinavian manuscripts, holding a wonderful collection of mythological sagas. One of them is of course the *Völuspá* which is a foretelling of the fate of the giants, worlds, gods, and men. This rich allegorization starts with explaining the creation of the cosmos, how a Chaos-giant starts to procreate and is slaughtered¹ for the gods to “build” the cosmos from his slaughtered remains. It continues with the glorification of the gods and how they lived rich and happy, built mighty temples and nice forges, played happy games in their mighty yards. Everything was perfect *untill three thurs-maids, very powerful, came from the worlds of the giants*. From here on the saga changes drastically and the journey towards Ragna Røk begins.

¹ Compare to the Babylonian mythos of Kingu.

These *three thurs-maids* are evidently Gullveig-Heiðr-Aurboða which is later called in the same foretelling the *thrice burned and the thrice born*, something I will verify throughout this book. Not many have dared to admit this and they have actually kept their pen in their ink-well on this one, which surprises me as it is a vital clue in the ON mythology as a whole. I like to understand this as the introduction

of Gullveig in the ON mythology and sagas, an allegorization of the fact that from the very beginning she planted the *seed of destruction* into this world. With this explanatory epithet we now have a good understanding of what she really was. This will be the basis of my research of Gullveig's entity and essence in the mythological sagas.



THE OLD ONE

One of the primordial determined thurses that survived Óðinn's tyranny was Gullveig; because her purpose was too important, nothing could really stop her – the saga about her rime-heart below will confirm why. The cosmic overlords tried, but the black essence of Gullveig was too powerful; her black rime-cold glacier-made heart was created from primordial black ice, spewed out from Chaos itself. She is the feminine representation of the acosmic Chaos – the wrath beyond wraths, the all-devourer beyond all-devourers; she is the anti-cosmic womb and the cosmic tomb – which is represented in the \diamond -rune.

She was called by many different names throughout the sagas depending on what era, what aspect and what shape she took as a shape-shifter. Known names for Gullveig are Heiðr, Aurboða, Angrboða and Hyrrokin. Proof of the analogies will be provided throughout this book. As Angrboða she took the eastern parts of Jötunheimr, which was called Járnvíðr, ironwood, as her province. The sagas depict it as very dark and atrocious, and as an impenetrable forest. It was there where she spawned monster and demon hordes; the kin of Fenrir – as it is said in *Völuspá*:

¹ An interesting detail here is that Eggþér sits on a pile as a guardian and plays on his harp, and his main purpose is to guard and wait for Fjalarr; Surtr's son, who will come to Eggþér as a red rooster. The gate-guard at Fjalarr's mighty hall deep in Jötunheimr sits on a pile and playing on a harp, just like Eggþér. Outside the giantess Gerðr's yard, she is Gullveig's daughter, sits a herder on a *haugr* too. This analogy between Eggþér, Fjalarr and Gerðr, and Gambanteinn is most challenging.

² For more information about *galgviðr* see the chapter on Járnvíðr.

In the east she the old one sat
in Járnvíðr
and there bore
Fenrir's kin.

Inside Járnvíðr it is told that Gullveig lives with the *sword keeper* Eggþér, he is her shepherd (*gygjar hirðir*). According to my theory (which I will explain thoroughly later on), he hides and guards Gambanteinn, the sword of vengeance, for Surtr until Ragna Røk. As it is told in the beginning of Ragna Røk, Eggþér sits on a big pile¹, assumedly happy from the knowledge of what is to come, playing on his harp (it is, in my opinion, probably below this big heap where he keeps Surtr's sword). *Völuspá* 42 says:

He, the giantess' herder, the happy Eggþér, sat upon the heap and played on the harp; above him in *galgviðr*² called a light red rooster, his name was Fjalarr.

It is not much known of Eggþér, but as his name tells us he probably has just

one important purpose: to guard the sword of Surtr named Gambanteinn, created by Loki. Eggþér, sword keeper or servant; his name derives from the ON *egg*, the edge or blade of a sword, and *-þér* derives from the ON *þegn*, a thane, liegeman or subject, meaning a servant, which makes me think of *Völuspá*, where he is called *gýgjar hirðir*, the giantess' herdsman; *hirðir* as in *hirð*, a king's or earl's body-guard, the king's men. This could mean that Eggþér was supposed to be the giantess' herdsman who was taking care of her monster-herd and at the same time, being her servant, he was keeping or guarding a sword. The sword is also mentioned in the above mentioned stanza from *Völuspá* where it is said the Surtr's son Suttung-Fjalarr will come as a red rooster and visit Eggþér to collect the sword. And you can compare the name Eggþér to the name of Beowulf's father Ecgþeow, which most likely is an Anglo-Saxon version of Eggþér: OE *ecg*, ON *egg*, edge or sword-blade, and OE *þeow*, ON *þegn*, thane, subject or servant.

*

Gullveig; the descendant of the rime-powers – Loki's female counterpart and ally – is as beautiful as her true husband Loki and her daughter Gerðr. Gerðr was the daughter of Gullveig-Aurboða and Gýmir: «*Gýmir hét maðr, en kona hans Aurboða. Hon var bergrisa ættar. Dóttir þeira er Gerðr, er allra kvinna var fegrst*», "A man was called Gýmir, and his spouse Aurboða: she was of the giant-race; their daughter was Gerðr, who was fairest of all women."

Gullveig should be looked upon as a mother-giantess, because she had procreated most of the hordes of baningar, monsters and wolf-thurses, which will all gather, fight and triumph on the final day of wrath – Ragna Røk. Her most important ragnarokian children with Loki are Jörmungandr, Fenrir, and Hel. And not only is she a mother-giantess; under the name Heiðr, the shining one, she is the witch-giantess; the wielder of the blackest seeds; she was the brightness crawling out of the abyss and taking form, up through endless darkness and slithering through the crusty bounds of middle earth. Bright as a shadowless light she came; erect like a burning spine of a wand she stood, and started a journey to the yards of ungovernable and receptive folk to teach them about the unknown and dark arts of the underworlds and beyond. She was known as the wicked crone; giantess of the runes and black magic, and the one who came at midnight up from under earth and walked between houses to visit seiðr-women to teach them of her ways. She is the inventor of black magic and runes – the craft and cunning to seduce giants, humans and gods to gain her end. And from her bewitched seat, the *seiðstóll* or *rokstóll*, she taught this magic,

which struck as a weapon with confusion, disease and death. She enjoys teaching the humans of the anti-cosmic runes, and these runes are of rime-thursian black magic. This is her *crone*-aspect, which is generously emphasized in the Old Norse lore. Gullveig-Heiðr got some people – some black souls which had managed to stay receptive to the black and anti-cosmic light – to truly understand her magic and purpose. This understanding has been called *Fræ Aurboðu*, Aurboða's Seed – the carrier of the poison, which is represented with the \diamond -rune – one of the runes particularly sacred to Gullveig:

¹ A free translation by the author, originally written by Rydberg.

The destructive seeds, which Gullveig in the dawn of time sowed in the minds of humanity, granting harvests throughout centuries, and with each century henceforth richer.¹

*

Gullveig is as intelligent as beautiful – cunning and quick-witted – and she has a very strong potential in foreseeing spiteful moves in her sinister way of thinking. This weighs heavy for me as I think Gullveig is thought of to be the seeress who foretells the *Völuspá*. As a female counterpart of Loki, she made sly plans from the beginning of the creation of the cosmos and follows them to the end. She brought darkness from the very depths of the dungeons of Niflheimr, to the brightest garden of Ásgarðr. This skilled cunning is only wielded by her and Loki of all the powers in existence. So it was not an accidental occurrence that Gullveig first got accepted and was very popular with the *ásir* – just like her masculine counterpart, and it took a very long time and a large amount of effort before the *ásir* became aware of her hate and destructive intentions. In fact, they uncovered her intentions when it was too late, when she had already wielded her pestilent magic for centuries and sown more anti-cosmic seeds than there are stars in the sky. She had spawned legions of horrible monsters, strengthened her powers in black anti-cosmic seiðr, killed many gods and men, and evoked relentless dark powers from within her own darkness and abysmal essence. She has turned so many men, sung endlessly black galdrs, and hailed the current of Chaos for so long that the cosmic doom is inevitable.

It was already too late when the *ásir* understood that Gullveig, under the name of Aurboða, had worked as Frigg's maidservant and got Freyja's confidence by trickery, and with malicious craftiness got Freyja to use black seiðr. Furthermore, since Freyja is the goddess of fertility and was worshipped richly over Scandinavia, one easily understands the devastating consequences Gullveig had in mind. As the *ásir* understood the terrible outcome this black witchcraft would have if it spread and



circulated, they panicked. They seized her, tortured her by thrusting their spears into her body, and held her with their spears over a bonfire and burned her to death in the shimmering halls of Ásgarðr; instantaneously and without trial. This relentless action by the *ásir* would have a major impact on the god's and *vanir*'s alliance later in the sagas as Gullveig had influenced the *vanir* to follow her and not the gods.

As self-sacrifice is Gullveig's biggest virtue, I am sure this was according to her plans. Furthermore, as Gullveig is of Ýmir's primordial rime-thurs family (Bergelmir's grandchildren's blood, the younger thursian dynasty), it was impossible for the *ásir* to burn her rime-heart with cosmic flames – where her grim soul laid hidden. As they burned her in a bonfire, her rime-heart would not burn, it was only half singed by the cosmic flames. For her heart is as cold as the primordial ice that

¹ Poison.

made Ýmir: the source of *Hvergelmir's Venomous Waters* – the *eitr*¹. The cosmic flames are impure and could only burn Gullveig's *form* and not her *essence*. Therefore her spirit or essence survived and was reborn into the worlds; in the sagas this is allegorized as her heart was only half-burnt – *the heart of primeval cold*. This is how she got the epithet *Hyrrokin*, “the flame smoked”, meaning that the divine flames were impure by *smoke*; too impure to incinerate Gullveig's essence. The smoke has been compared with fog and thereby link Gullveig with this myth to her “place of birth” in Niflheimr. She is also known as *úrsvöl* and *úrsvöl gymis vølva*, Gýmir's primevally cold witch. Three times she got burned with impure flames, three times she was reborn.

After Gullveig, the origin of the evil runes and witchcraft, got executed and burnt by Þórr and the *ásir*, Loki looked in the ashes for her half burnt heart - as he knew of her plans – found it and devoured it. After a time, he gave birth to her infamous children. Many of their siblings are called *Baningar*: *The plague-bringers*, or *The destructors*. In the beginning of Ragna Røk hordes of Baningar, such as thurs-wolves and werewolves – Gullveig's and Eggþér's monster-herds – storm out from Járnvíðr in the east in order to destroy the world. Loki in thurs-wrath led the vast army of the monster-herds from Járnvíðr – evil beings of sundry kinds – as Loki has the constant and triumphant place as their faithful spearhead.



GULLVEIG'S MISINTERPRETATION AS FREYJA

The misinterpretation of Gullveig as Freyja is a very common phenomenon in modern ON literature, and it is as false as it is irritating and disgraceful. Most of the people who make this false assumption are the magi of the white-magic: *odinists* and *wiccans*. But what surprises me the most is the fact that respected and successful authors also follow this careless hypothesis, people who should have been well-read in this mythological literature *and* well-experienced in the Old ways of Norse magic. For instance, the American Stephen Edred Flowers (he has received a doctorate in *Germanic Languages and Medieval Studies* from the University of Texas, and he is author of the best-seller books *Futhark: A handbook of rune magic* and *Runelore* – though I personally think that his best book is *Hermetic Magic: The Postmodern Magical Papyrus of Abaris*, which is not even a book on Old Norse belief) claims that Heiðr is Freyja in his best-seller book *Runelore* – he says (I quote):

This “thrice-born” völv (seeress) is certainly Freyja, and it is in this form that she became Óðinn’s teacher in the ways of seidr.

Earlier in the same book in chapter 6 he says:

Too many modern rune-magic schools have been forced, either by their ignorance of the timeless traditions or by their inability to gain access to the traditional mysteries, to ignore or to forget the true runic sources handed down to us in lapidary splendor by our ancestors.

Well, that is exactly what he has done himself with the understanding of Gullveig. He might be well-read, but I ask myself whether he has the understanding in the ON mythology that he should. It is obvious that this is what he wants her to be, and just claims this to be certain. Additionally, earlier in the same paragraph he says:

The Ásir tried to kill her by piercing her with spears and burning her. But each time she was reborn. The third time she transformed herself from Gullveig into Heiðr (the Shining One).

¹ Is Flowers saying here that Freyja taught herself black magic?

First, why would the *ásir* want to kill the supposed Freyja? And secondly, if Gullveig became Freyja after the burning, I wonder why this would happen. Freyja already existed when Gullveig was burned. This can be seen as Gullveig, in a disguised appearance and under the name Aurboða – Gýmir’s wife and Gerðr’s mother –, infiltrated her way into Fólkvangr as Freyja’s maid and got Freyja into black magic¹, before Gullveig was caught and burned. It is told in *Fjölsvinnsmál*

that one of the maids of Menglōð-Freyja is Aurboða. So, did he mean that Gullveig's essence just gave up and entered the already existing goddess Freyja?

Ström traces a similarity between Freyja and Gullveig in the myths of the *Vanir*-wars as “one skillful in seid” and the origin of the first *war of people* in the world. He speaks very vaguely of this and I’m not even sure he tries to compare them as one.

John Lindow makes a weak attempt to compare Gullveig with Freyja in his book *Norse Mythology*:

Since Ynglinga saga says that Freyja first brought seid to the *Æsir*, it is not impossible that Gullveig is Freyja, and that she brought seid to the *Æsir* in the first instance either as a strategy in the war, or that her bringing of seid started the war. Beyond this, many fanciful attempts have been made to interpret Gullveig, some based on a literal understanding of her name as “gold-drink”.

This is a prime example of how poorly people study Gullveig and instead just guess. It is obvious here where the gold-idea comes from; it is Freyja's gold-thirst that has been transmitted to Gullveig through misinterpretations. And because people just have been taken for granted that Gullveig's name has something to do with gold (as in gull-), they just restricted themselves to this hypothesis.

Margaret Clunies Ross and many other researchers follow the same line of theories as Ström. You kind of get the feeling that there is a fixed theory that no researcher dares to cross to keep their academic dignity.

¹ Freyr owned Gerðr, she was the daughter of Gýmir and Aurboða, and of giant-race.

Kaldera claims to have consulted with both Aurboða and Angrboða and unraveled the whole misunderstanding. Supposedly, they told him that they are not the same giantess, and that Aurboða was just Freyja's messenger, but in Vanaheimr not in Ásgarðr (no comment!).

This is what the Old sagas tell us about Gullveig-Heiðr-Aurboða-Angrboða-Hyrrokin, as it is said in *Völuspá In Skamma* 2:

Freyr átti Gerði, hon var Gýmis dóttir, jætna ættar, ok Aurboðu.¹

Freyr married the giantess Gerðr, daughter of Gýmir and Aurboða, in exchange for his sword (*Gambanteinn*) amongst other things. (Gýmir and Aurboða are sup-

posedly parents to the cruel dog-headed giant Beli). The sword was handed over to Gýmir and Aurboða in the sagas, and all of a sudden it was kept under Angrboða's command in Járnvíðr. This shows strong arguments that Aurboða has the same identity as Angrboða. Aurboða was known to wield black magic and was called *úrsvöl gymis vólva*, Gýmir's ever-cold witchwoman, in the *Prose Edda*, and this links her to the myth about Gullveig-Angrboða-Heiðr too – *the ever cold one* or *the one of primeval cold*, referring to Gullveig-Angrboða-Heiðr's rime-thurs heart that will not burn because of its blood and essence of primeval ice: *eitr* – *Hrimþurs origin*. Something equally important from the same paragraph as *úrsvöl gymis vólva* are the words: «*förir björn, þar er bára brestr, undinna festa, óþt i ægis kjopta úrsvöl gymis vólva*», which say that Gýmir's primevally cold witch often conveys ships in wild waves, this *wind- or storming-aspect* links her strongly with Gullveig-Angrboða-Heiðr's other identity *Hyrrokin*, who “pushed” out Baldr's ship out to sea as a favor to the gods. She is represented as a storm-giantess in some myths, in *Ynglinga saga* for example – giantess of the eastern storms. Why Aurboða got represented as something from the east can only be linked to the Járnvíðr and Angrboða in the underworld, which are repeatedly explained to be located in the east – as it is said in *Völuspá*:

Austr sat in aldna í Járnvíði ok fæddi þar Fenris kindir.¹

And like (her true husband) Loki, she made her way into the walls of Ásgarðr, where giants are strictly forbidden, and got Freyja into malicious activities. It is told in *Völsunga saga* that Hrimnir's daughter comes to Ásgarðr as a gift, and Hrimnir's daughter is Gullveig-Angrboða-Heiðr, as stated in *Völuspá In Skamma*.

¹ In the east sat the Old One in the Ironwood and gave birth to Fenrir's children.

Maybe the whole misunderstanding of Gullveig being Freyja derives from Loki's spiteful attack on Freyja in *Lokasenna*:

Be quiet, Freyja!
You are a witch and full of destruction.

As Aurboða taught her black magic, Freyja was a goddess of witchcraft and loved gold, I guess a lazy mind would just draw parallels from this.

Simek suggests that Aurboða has similarities with the chthonic beings. Rydberg has proven that Aurboða is Gullveig-Heiðr-Angrboða-Hyrrokin, and I think I just did too.

Lastly I want to bring up known recorded kennings in the Old Icelandic sagas for gold and Freyja, to show that there are no whatsoever insinuations that Gullveig would be Freyja. Snorri's *Edda* has a great collection of sundry kennings and I believe this is the best source. Below you find a nearly complete collection of gold and Freyja kennings, taken from *Skáldskaparmál*, Snorra *Edda*:

40. GULLSKENNINGAR

Hvernig skal kenna gull? Svá, at
kalla þat eld Ægis ok barr Glasis,
haddr Sifjar, höfuðband Fullu,
grátr Freyju, munntal ok rödd ok
orð jötna, dropa Draupnis ok regn
eða skúr Draupnis eða augna
Freyju, otrgjöld, nauðgjald ásanna,
sáð Fýrisvalla, haugþak Hölga, eldr allra
vatna ok handar, grjót ok sker
eða blik handar.

44. KENNINGAR Á GULLI OK FREYJU

Hér heyrir, at gull er kennt til
höfuðbands Fullu, er orti Eyvindr
skáldaspillir:

104.

Fullu skein á fjöllum

fallsól bráavallar.

Ullar kjóls of allan

aldr Hákunar skaldum.

Gull er kallat grátr Freyju, sem fyrr
er sagt. Svá kvað Skúli

Þorsteinsson:

105.

Margr of hlaut of morgin

mordelds, þar er val felldum,

Freyju tár at fleiri

fárbjóðr; at þar várum.

Ok sem kvað Einarr Skúlason:

106.

Þar er Mardallar milli,

meginhurðar, liggr skurða,

Gauts berum galla þrúttinn,

grátr, dalreyðar látri.

Ok hér hefir Einarr enn kennt svá Freyju
at kalla hana móður

Hnossar eða konu Óðs, svá sem

hér:

107.

Eigi þverr fyrir augna

Óðs beðvinu Róða

ræfrs, eignisk svá, regni

ramsvell, konungr elli.

Ok enn svá:

108.

Hróðrbarni kná ek Hörnar,

hlutum dýran grip, stýra,

brandr þrymr gjalfrs á grand

gollvífiðu, hlífir;

sáðs, berr sinnar móður,

svans unni mér gunnar

fóstrgæðandi Fróða,

Freys nift bráa driftir.

Hér getr ok þess, at Freyju má svá kenna
at kalla hana systur Freys. Ok enn svá:

109.

Nýt buðumk Njarðar dóttur,
nálægt var þat stáli
vel of hrósa ek því vísa
vörn, sævar bál barni.

Hér er hon kölluð dóttir Njarðar.
Ok enn Svá:

110.

Gaf, sá er erring ofrar,
ógnprúðr Vanabrúðar
þing Váfaðar þröngvir
þróttöflga mér dóttur;
ríkr leiddi mey mækis
mátvaldr á beð skaldi
Gefnar, glóðum drifna,
Gautreks svana brautar.

Hér er hon kölluð Gefn ok
Vanabrúðr. Til allra heita Freyju er
rétt at kenna grátinn ok kalla svá
gullit, ok á marga lund er þessum
kenningum breytt, kallat hagl eða
regn eða él eða dropar eða skúrir
eða forsar augna hennar eða kinna
eða hlýra eða brá eða hvarma.

45. GULL KALLAT MÁL JÖTNA

Hér má þat heyra, at kallat er orð
eða rödd jötna gullit, svá sem fyrr
er sagt. Svá kvað Bragi skáld:

111.

Þann átta ek vin verstan

vaströdd en mér baztan
Ála undirkúlu
óniðraðan þriðja.

Hann kallaði stein vasta undirkúlu,
en jötun Ála steinsins, en gull rödd
jötuns.

56. ENN FRÁ GULLSKEN- NINGUM

Í Bjarkarmálum inum fornum eru
tölð mörg gullsheiti. Svá segir þar:

126.

Gramr inn gjöflasti
gæddi hirð sína
Fenju forverki,
Fáfnis Miðgarði,
Glasís glóbarri,
Grana fagrbyrði,
Draupnis dýrsveita,
dúni Grafvitnis.

127.

Ýtti örr hilmir,
aldir við tóku,
Sifjar svarðfestum,
svelli dalnauðar,
tregum otrsgjöldum,
tárur Mardallar,
eldi Órunar,
Iðja glysmálum.

128.

Gladdi gunnveitir,
gengum fagrúnir,
Þjaza þingskilum
þjóðir hermargar,
Rínar rauðmalmi,

rógi Niflunga,
vísi inn vígdjarfi.
Varði hann Baldr þeygi.

Gull er kallat í kenningum eldr
handar eða liðs eða leggjjar, því at
þat er rautt, en silfr snær eða sveill
eða héli, því at þat er hvítt. Með
sama hætti skal ok kenna gull eða
silfr til sjóðs eða diguls eða lauðar,
en hvárttveggja silfr ok gull má
vera grjót handar eða hálsgjörð nökkurs
þess manns, er títt var at
hafa men. Men ok hringar eru
bæði silfr ok gull, ef eigi er annan
veg greint. Sem kvað Þorleikr fagri:

129.
Kastar gramr á glæstar
gegn valstöðvar þegnum,
ungr vísi gefr eisu
armleggs, digulfarmi.

Ok sem kvað Einarr skálaglamm:

130.
Liðbröndum kná Lundar
landfrækn jöfurr granda.
Hykka ek ræsis rekka
Rínar grjót of þrjóta.

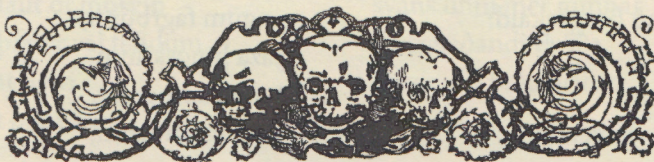
Svá kvað Einarr Skúlason:

131.
Blóðeisu liggr bæði
bjargs tveim megin geima
sjóðs, á ek sökkva stríði,
snær ok eldr, at mæra.
Ok enn sem hann kvað:

132.
Dægr þrymr hvert, en hjarta
hlýrskildir ræðr mildu
Heita blakks, of hvítum
hafleygr digulskafli.
Aldri má fyr eldi
áls hrynbrautar skála,
öll viðr folka fellir
framræði snæ bræða.

Hér er gull kallat eldr áls
hrynbrautar, en silfr snær
skálanna. Svá kvað Þórðr
Mæraskáld:

133.
Sér á seima rýri,
sigðis látrs at átti,
hrauns glaðsendir handa,
Hermóðr föður góðan.



GULLVEIG, THE WOLVES AND WEREWOLVES' ANCESTRESS & FOSTERER

Gullveig is known throughout the mythology to be *The Wolf's* mother. *Völuspá* says that she bred Fenrir's progeny in Járnnviðr, and it is believed that she is the mother of Garmr, Hati and Sköll¹, too (even if Garmr is spoken of as a dog guarding the gates to the underworld just like Cerberus). In Snorri's *Edda* and in his *Gylfaginning* he says that at Baldr's funeral the ásir called for Hyrrokin to help them release Baldr's funeral ship, and she came riding on a wolf².

Just as Lilith, Gullveig has clearly received the role as the demon-mother that eternally begets demon-children. The dark mother-aspect is an important side of her role in the mythology and we can tell a lot from it, we can understand her function and position by comparing her to other dark mother goddesses:

Oh great Lilith, open your blood filled womb and grant me entrance to your kingdom of unholy desires and unlawful dreams! Mother of all demons, proud mistress of Satan, Oh evil goddess Taninsama, open wide the gates of Gehinnom and let the dark flame of my demonic Self flourish in the purifying darkness of Gamaliel!³

Another dark goddess that is in analogy with Gullveig is the dog or the wolf goddess, the chthonic and three-fold goddess, ruler of the underworld hound Cerberus: Hecate. Many of her mythological qualities correspond with Gullveig: the underworldly connection, the dark demon-mother aspect (they are connected to both wolfish and serpent forces) and the crone aspect:

I invoke the constant blood-thirsty wolfpack of Hecate, whose baying in the elder days drove mankind to insanity! I invoke Vrykolakas, who with his bloody jaws raised to the black moon sings hymns in homage to Hecate! I invoke the undead and the death-bringing!⁴

¹ Petersen, 1869, *Nordisk Mytologi*. Rydberg, I 1886, II 1889, *Undersökningar i Germanisk Mythologi*.

² *Þá var sent í Jötunheima eftir gýgi þeirri er Hyrrokkin hét, en er hún kom og reið vargi.*

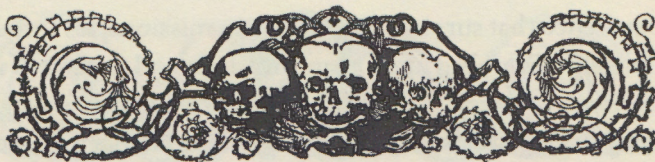
³&⁴ Temple of the Black Light, 2002, *Liber Azerate*. Freely translated by the author.

⁵ *Þat er nú sagt, at Frigg heyrir bæn þeira ok segir Óðni, hvers þau biðja. Hann verðr eigi örþrífráða ok tekr óskmey sína, dóttur Hrímnis jötuns».* "And so it is said that Óðinn hears their prayer, and Freyja no less hears with they prayed to her: so she, never lacking for all good counsel, calls to her her maid, the daughter of Hrímnir the giant." *Völsunga saga* 2.

We can trace evidence that survived the Christian missionaries through the ON literature, that Gullveig was looked upon as an ancestress and fosterer of werewolves, and that these werewolves were probably bred in Járnnviðr, which is allegorized with the wordings *dark and deep woods*. In *Völsunga saga* it is told that a giantess who was

a maid at Frigg's in Ásgarðr and had been in Miðgarðr, and who is known as Hrímnir's daughter⁵, is getting married to a king in Miðgarðr and through him being a mother and grandmother to werewolves, who are running wild in the dark woods and killing many men. This is evidently Gullveig, and we can notice that she was seen by the ON people as a mother-giantess of the wolves and werewolves. Werewolves have always been a big issue in the Scandinavian folklore and sagas, and had a huge impact on the people. Even in their magical praxis werewolfism had a role. Traces of the belief in a spiritual werewolf-metamorphosis can be found in the tales of the berserks – the warriors that mentally and spiritually invoked the beast within them and went through a process of werewolf-metamorphosis. In their case, by the remaining sources, the berserks became bears and were receiving the bears' powers and strengths. To help this process to take form they wore "shirts" of bear-hide; hence *ber-serkr*. If I let my fantasy flow, or rather put myself into their situation, I would believe that they most likely wore bear-heads as helmet adornments and bear-paws and claws on their hands; even to carry a dried bear-heart from a bear they ritually killed in a leather pouch during the transformation; to eat smoked or dried bear-meat to get poisoned by the bear's wrathful strength; to wear bear-teeth around their neck to gain the bears powerful jaws, and claws around their wrists to gain the bears powerful strike – anything to link their spirits to the bear-essence.

*Howl like Garmr my fair beast, and devour my flesh!
 Let your fangs blacken my blood, and your essence touch my spirit!
 Fenrir ek kalla þik, helulfrinn, kjøptum blóðugr skal ljós lifa eta!*



GULLVEIG'S BROTHER HROSSÞJÓFR

Gullveig only has one known sibling, and the confirmation for that is saved only in *Völuspá in skamma*, where it is said:

Heiðr and Hrossþjófr
the children of Hrímnir.

So by *Völuspá in skamma* Gullveig-Heiðr and Hrossþjófr are children of Hrímnir. Hrímnir¹ whom I believe is analogous to the primordial rime-thurs Bergelmir. If I'm right Hrossþjófr must then be a Nifl-dwelling rime-thurs. In fact, a short glimpse into their rime-thursian blood-line will let us easily see that Heiðr and Hrossþjófr are children of the earliest rime-thurses in the ON mythology. Hrímgrímnir (for me analogous to Þrúðgelmir) was viewed as one of the most horrible rime-thurses in the Old Norse, this is what *Skírnismál* testifies to in the lines where Skírnir threatens Gerðr² with baneful words:

Hrímgrímnir is the thurs' name,
whom you shall belong to
far down below the corpse-gate.

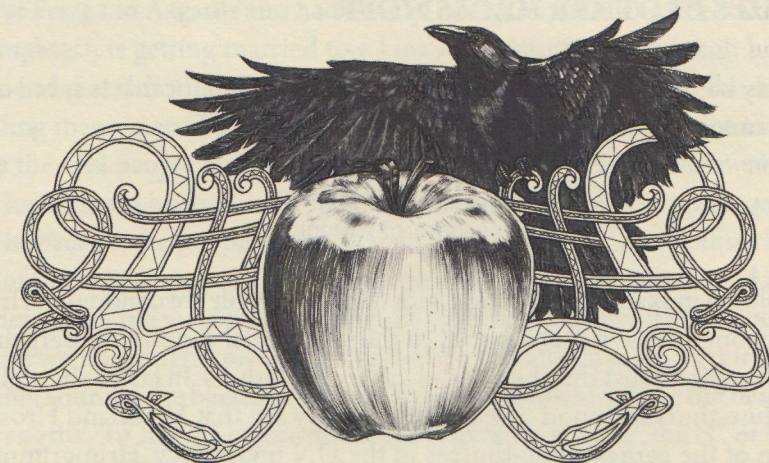
Hrímgrímnir-Þrúðgelmir is Ýmir's first identified son, and Hrímgrímnir-Þrúðgelmir himself is father to Hrímnir-Bergelmir who is in his turn father to Heiðr and Hrossþjófr; so their great grandfather is Ýmir himself – a key rime-thursian blood-line. That said, Hrossþjófr is most likely abiding in Niflheimr in those mighty rime-thursian halls that *Skírnismál* 30 reveals, *hrímþursa hallar*, by his grandfathers' sides.

¹ Hrímnir of Niflheimr has his counterpart in *Múspellzheimr*; Eimnir – the burner, who is probably Surtr's left hand and one of the world-destroyers.

² Gullveig-Heiðr's daughter – Hrímgrímnir-Þrúðgelmir is her great grandfather whom Skírnir might not realize (or the author of the sagas missed.)

Saxo had access to a different version of Baldrs Draumar, and he says that it was Hrossþjófr (called by him Rostiophus Phinnicus) who let Óðinn know that his son and Rind would avenge Baldr's death. In the version we know of today it is from Hrossþjófr's sister Gullveig who Óðinn gets this information.

Hrossþjófr's name means horse thief, which is definitely an epithet from some old important mythological saga; sadly this saga is lost and there are no surviving explanations to his name. Both Saxo's witness and Hrossþjófr's name prove that there were many sagas that have been lost forever containing very important information. However, this is all we know of the rime-thurs Hrossþjófr.



Heiðr

Second-born and second burned; her death created Fenrir.

Heiðr – *she the shining one*, she is the witch-giantess; the wielder of the blackest seeds; she was the brightness crawling out of the abyss and taking form, up through endless darkness and slithering through the crusty boundry of the middle earth. Bright as a shadowless light she came; erect like a burning spine of a wand she stood, and started a journey to the yards of ungovernable and receptive folk to teach them about the unknown and black arts of the underworld.

Heiðr is mentioned by name twice in the *Sæmundar Edda*; once in *Völuspá* and once in *Völuspá in skamma*, and both occasions give key information about her role in the sagas. *Völuspá* introduces her (from *Codex Regius*):

Heiðr her name was,
to houses she came,
the seeress with adequate prophecies.
She wielded witchcraft,
she conjured disease,
she invoked Leikin,
always was she loved
by wicked women.

This stanza gives her the role as the crone in the ON mythology and the fact that the saga says "always was she loved by wicked women", «*a var hon angan illrar brúðar*» (the ON word *illr* means evil and wicked), shows us that Heiðr turns to "wicked women" to teach her craft. By this detail we can assure that Heiðr is neither a seeress from the *ásir*- nor the *vánir*-races, as they promote the humankind to flourish, and the thursian race aims to dissolve them. Evil seeks evil and in this case that is exactly what the authors of *Völuspá* are saying. So according to *Völuspá*, Heiðr was the sorceress teaching the humans the evil craft, she was the giantess-sorceress who strode around in Miðgarðr, the middle world, to spread her seeds of underworldly powers, planting the capsules of dissolution in the depth of the human spirits. It is said that she came as three in the dawn of time, powerful out of Jötunheimr as a giantess. These three – powerful giantesses – were; Gullveig who was the underworldly mother, Heiðr who pervaded Miðgarðr, and Aurboða who infiltrated Ásgarðr – «*unz þrjár kvámu þursa meyjar ámátkar mjök ór jötunheimum*¹», "until three thursian giantesses came, very mighty, from the worlds of the giants."

Völuspá in skamma is a very important text because it gives us good access to the thursian genealogy. And about Heiðr it says:

Heiðr and Hrossþjófr
are Hrímnir's children.

According to *Skírnismál*, Hrímnir is a three-headed rime-thurs who dwells in Niflheimr beyond the underworld by Hrímgrímnir's side; Hrímgrímnir is the six-headed rime-thurs born in Chaos as a son of Ýmir-Aurgelmir. Rydberg proposes a theory that Hrímgrímnir is the same thurs as Þrúðgelmir and Hrímnir Bergelmir². This would mean that

1) Aurgelmir-Ýmir is the first thurs that came out of Ginnungagap, 2) Þrúðgelmir-Hrímgrímnir was the first identified son of Ýmir, and 3) Bergelmir-Hrímnir was the son of Þrúðgelmir-Hrímgrímnir³. He compares Hrímgrímnir's rank with Óðinn's, as Óðinn also has the epithet Grímnir which names him as the *ásir*'s clan-leader. He suggests that it is the same with Hrímgrímnir, and the prefix *hrím* is added to his name to state what race he rules over. Rydberg also states that Ýmir can't be the sole ruler of the thurs-race, as he created other races too. That's why Þrúðgelmir-Hrímgrímnir would be better fitting having that status. Another connection be-

¹ Jötunheimar, note plural.

² Rydberg, I 1886, II 1889, *Undersökningar I Germanisk Mythologi*.

³ Ýmir's two first children were actually a man and a woman, but there is no more information on this subject other than that they were just a man and a woman – *maðr ok kona*. My own hypothesis is that it was Loki and Gullveig; the first-born. As Heiðr is Gullveig's second appearance after the first burning and Bergelmir her father, it seems logic that Gullveig as her first appearance would have been born earlier, and that Ýmir would be the only one to be her father, as Þrúðgelmir did not have a daughter.

tween Þrúðgelmir and Hrímgrímnir can be the deformity of several heads that allegorizes their characters; Þrúðgelmir, son of Aurgelmir, is explained as having six heads in *Vafþrúðnismál* 29, 33:

After lots of winters,
before earth was created,
at that time Bergelmir was born;
Þrúðgelmir was his father,
and Aurgelmir his father.

...

with his (Ýmir-Aurgelmir's) feet
the wise giant bore
a six-headed son.

Hrímgrímnir is allegorized in *Skírnismál* 31 to have three heads, which makes me think of Þrúðgelmir. It is very rare to find a thurs with several heads in the sagas and as these sagas are written in different times there is a possibility that the narrators mix the number up, as there were no detailed accounts of the mythology and religion back in the time, only oral traditions, and the *Sæmundar Edda* was the first written account what we know of. After my studies in the ON mythology I dare to say that Rydberg's theory is most certainly a correct one.

This proves that Heiðr is a rime-giantess; a *hrímþurs*, and that she is created by powers connected to the primordial thurs-power Aurgelmir: she is certainly the daughter of Bergelmir. Her genealogy gives her a very strong connection to the mightiest powers of all and by this being a direct source to the primordial powers and knowledge. Furthermore, as she is a crone and a wielder of runes and magic, it makes her the most powerful thursian giantess who has revealed herself out of Jötunheimr's black gaping chasm.

*

Heiðr appears in the *Völsunga saga* under the name Hljóð, Hrímnir's daughter; there we find fragments of Old Norse mythos of giants finding a way into Ásgarðr without being detected – as a matter of fact it was Óðinn who had invited Heiðr into Ásgarðr as an *óskmey* (wishing-maid), obviously unknowing what she was. *Völsunga saga* is about a king and a queen that had no luck in having children, so they called for the gods to help them. Frigg answered their call by sending Hrímnir's daughter in a crow's appearance carrying an apple for them. Of course, after the queen had eaten the apple she had a child. Heiðr has here been working for Frigg as a maid in a fertility errand. Hrímnir's daughter is the same as Gullveig-Aurboða,

as *Völuspá in skamma* 4 tells us; «*Heiðr ok Hrossþjófr Hrímnis kindar*», "Heiðr and Hrossþjófr are Hrímnir's children", as we already know Heiðr and Gullveig are identified as the same giantess.¹ Why did just Heiðr of all maids get the job to fly as a crow with this magical apple – this metaphorical seed of achievement? Well, it is pretty logical for the authors to choose the giantess with the might of transformation and witchcraft to bring out this work; she, Heiðr, being here the instrument for a very powerful magical act, as she is working cunningly for Frigg to convert her into the blackest of seiðr.

The *Völsunga saga* also says that Hrímnir's daughter gets married to a king called Völsungr, and they had ten sons and one daughter (eleven children). This detail connects Hrímnir's daughter in *Völsunga saga* with Hrímnir's daughter Heiðr-Aurboða, as Aurboða is known to have just one daughter named Gerðr². Furthermore, as Heiðr dwelt with the king Völsungr on earth for a while it connects her with Heiðr in the ON mythology as the crone who walks around in the middle world. There is another detail in *Völsungs Saga* that got my attention; it is about the werewolf-aspect. For me it starts in chapter five, where all ten sons of Hrímnir's daughter Hljóð³ get captured and bound in a battle and their father Völsungr gets killed. For nine nights, at midnight, a she-wolf comes and kills and eats all nine brothers and leaves Sigmundr to live. Now, the line in Icelandic, «*nú nætr í samt kom sjá in sama ylgr um miðnætti*»⁴, gives us much important magical information concerning black magic and werewolfism: nine is a well documented (black) magical ON

number⁵, the ninth rune in the Uþark rune-row is the þ-rune which represents Necessity and Will; the essence of magical function. ON poets did not just grab details like this out of nowhere; numbers especially always had a deep meaning. The night was given to the troll and giants in ON folklore and mythology, and midnight, as in other traditions around the globe, was a very extraordinary time for dark powers to ascend from the underworld to enter Miðgarðr. Werewolves were seen in Old Scandinavia to be troll-like shape-shifters derived from Gullveig's kin; they all were of giant-breed. A human could possess this ability to shape-shift into a wolf, and this was metamorphic black magic which belongs to Gullveig and her allies. So in the line «*nú nætr í samt kom sjá in sama ylgr um miðnætti*» we learn that the ON people believed that werewolf-magic was analogous to the number nine, nocturnal praxis, and particularly to midnight. Well, the story tells that Hljóð's last and eldest son Sig-

¹ *Völsunga saga* 2, and see *Undersökningar I Germanisk Mythologi* by Rydberg as a good reference.

² Or even compared to Gullveig who had one daughter (Hel) and many sons.

³ Hljóð in Old Norse can mean howling, which is a very fitting name for the mother of wolves and werewolves, as she can be looked upon as a *pursylgr*, a thursian she-wolf.

⁴ "Nine nights in a row at midnight she came as a female werewolf."

⁵ Agrell, 1927, *Runornas Talmystik och dess Antika Förebild*. Linderholm, 1918, *Nordisk Magi*.

mundr killed the she-wolf by pulling out her tongue with his teeth. Later on in chapter eight Sigmundr and his son Sinfjolti were out in the woods to harden Sinfjolti with manly deeds, which in this saga meant that they went out to kill men and steal their wealth. One day they found a house with two men in it who each had a golden ring; these men were shape-shifters and had their wolf-guises hanging on the wall above their beds. In ON folklore people did not just turn into wolves like in modern movies, they actually had the wolf-guise as an outfit and “put it on” as they transformed. Anyway, Sigmundr and his son Sinfjolti stole them and became werewolves. They went out hunting men together and slew them. One time Sinfjolti found eleven men and slew them by himself. The number eleven turns up several times when it comes to Volsungr’s siblings; a metaphor which I see as a riddle to the *eitr-nexus*: the rime-blood. However, my main interest in this saga is that Hljóð’s son and grandson are werewolves, and she herself is a *hrímpurs* and her name in this saga, Hljóð, means *howling*, and even a mysterious she-wolf comes at midnight and slaughters and eats (!) nine of Hljóð’s younger sons. There is no doubt in my mind that the author of this saga wanted to tell the reader that Hljóð is Gullveig – rime-giantess and mother of werewolves.

*

The small information that *Völuspá*, *Völuspá in skamma*, and *Skírnismál* give us is in itself grand, as it proves that a) Heiðr is one of the three horrible and powerful giantesses who comes out of Jötunheimr in the dawn of time, b) she is a seeress and practices evil witchcraft, c) she turns to wicked folk, and d) Heiðr originates from Niflheimr and she has a rime-thurs as a father, which makes her a rime-thurs herself. All this connects her strongly with Gullveig and her essential aspects.

Concerning Heiðr’s name, there is a word with a very interesting meaning that derives from the ON word *heiðr* with the meaning heath, and it is *heiðingi* (*heiðinn*), a heathen, and gentile. However, it is also used as a metaphor for a wolf, meaning someone who lives on heaths and in the wilderness; very much like the ON word *vargr* which means the same but more of an outlaw-characteristic. This is interesting because first off Gullveig-Heiðr is seen as a *vargr* and all of her children and spouses the same. As her follower you should live like a *heiðr* or *vargr* – meaning not submitting to any law or authority, provoke your spiritual Chaos-fire, and unleash the wrathful werewolf within your spirit. Compare this to Heiðr’s name Hljóð in *Völsunga Saga*.

I rather am free and alone, than being a slave amongst a mass!
Heil Hrimheiðr, freer of my imprisoned spirit!
Heil Heiðr, unleasher of my beast!
X X X





Aurboða

Third-born and third burnt; her death created Hel.

The purpose of Gullveig going under the name Aurboða and being the daughter of Hrímnir had a very important function, and I shall investigate her every appearance in the ON mythology under her veil of Aurboða. She is the most mysterious guise of Gullveig in the mythos, not much is said about her and very few people see a connection between her and Gullveig in the old sagas – so I present and underline the nexus here.

Aurboða is only mentioned by name twice in *Sæmundar Edda*, first in *Völuspa* in *skamma* 2 which gives us the important evidence that Aurboða is Gýmir's spouse; this detail will make it much easier to understand her role in the sagas. The second time she is mentioned is in *Fjölsvinnsmál* 38 where she is named as one of Menglōð-Freyja's maids. This is also a very important detail that connects her with Heiðr, for instance. Importantly though, just because she is so seldom mentioned by name does not mean that that is the only evidence of her entity in the *Sæmundar Edda*; but thanks to those two times she is mentioned by name we know the following; a) she is Gýmir's spouse, which most likely means that her abode is in Gýmir's and Gerðr's yard in Jötunheimr, this connects her to this place throughout the full body of the *Edda*. For example, her presence can be found in the saga called *Skírnismál*

without being named in it because of what I just explained, b) she is mentioned by name to be a maid at Freyja's, which gives us the knowledge that for a period of time she dwells at Freyja's, and as the cunning giantess that she is her intentions with Freyja can only be malignant. Furthermore, in *Hyndluljóð* Freyja says: «*Vaki mærmeyja, vaki mín vina, Hyndla systir, er í helli býr*», "Wake up maid of maids, wake up my friend, Hyndla my sister who lives in the cave." Hyndla is most certainly Gullveig, and Freyja calls Hyndla her maid, her friend, and her sister; I believe this was supposed to be understood as Aurboða's service as Freyja's maid.

I thought I would start with the dramatic marriage that we find in *Skírnismál*. It is the mythos of Freyr's bridal payment of Gerðr and the highly significance of the Gambanteinn, Surtr's Sword of Revenge. The beginning of the Gambanteinn-mythos starts in the saga called *Skírnismál* where Freyr sits in what can be understood as a tower or throne called the *Hliðskjálf*, from where he gazed into *Jötunheimr* and saw, on Gýmir's yard, a very beautiful maid-giantess, *whose skin is so pale and lovely that it shined like the sun*; this was Gerðr. He decided that he wanted her as he was bewitched by her beauty, and ordered his servant and messenger Skírnir to ride to the lands of the giants to ask for her hand in favor to Freyr, and Skírnir did so. Gerðr is the daughter of Gýmir and Aurboða and she lives on their property. When he arrived at Gýmir and Aurboða's yard he was held back by angry and snarling dogs in front of Gerðr's house. Outside on a mound sat a herder as well and he kept watch (I will say more about this detail further down). Skírnir was invited to Gerðr's house by her and he tries with bribes of treasures and gold and threats to woo her, but she refuses, as with her mighty and dangerous father and all gold they possess she did not fear his words. Skírnir then threatens with a magical sword and cursing magic¹, and after this Gerðr all of a sudden just agrees. This surprising turn has always troubled me, because it makes no sense; at first she is so confident, she knows that neither Skírnir or Freyr have anything to put against the mighty thursian powers that protect Gýmir and Aurboða's land and daughter; these two giants alone are very powerful. Equally, by Gerðr's answers to Skírnir's previous speech you can tell that she has neither respect nor fear towards Skírnir and Freyr. And then it struck me; after a deeper analysis of the consequences of this myth I understood that there was a much deeper end to this odd route; Gerðr had her mother's cunning and intelligence, and she was most definitely in league with her mother's genius plans – Gullveig's eminent plans, in conspiracy with Loki, of destroying the worlds of the *æsir*. Freyr gives his well-known magical sword as a bridal payment for Gerðr – the sword that brandishes itself (*Skírnismál* 8), the sword

¹ I have investigated and written about these classic stanzas of Old Norse curses and runemagic thoroughly in other texts dealing with Old Norse witchcraft, magic and religion.

¹ *Skírnismál* 32: «*Til holts ek gekk... gambantein at geta, gambantein ek gat*», "I went to the woods... to procure Gambanteinn, and Gambanteinn I procured."

² *Völuspá* 52: «*Surtr ferr sunnan með sviga lævi, skinn af sverði sól valtíva*», "Surtr fares from the south with the switch bane, and the warrior's sword shines like the sun."

³ Myrkviðr is for me equivalent to Járnsviðr.

he later calls by name, Gambanteinn¹, Surtr's Sword of Revenge which will finally come back to Surtr – the sword that once belong to the *ésir*² – and with which Surtr kills Freyr himself with during Ragna Røk. *Lokasenna* 42 explains the bridal payment in full:

Loki said:

With gold you bought Gýmir's daughter
and sold also your sword.

But when the sons of Múspell
will come riding over Myrkviðr³
what weapon will protect you then, scum?

In plain words, Gerðr got forced to marry Freyr, but referring to the way Gerðr speaks in this epic I have a strong feeling that she knows about something that doesn't come out in this saga, it would seem that she just agreed to the marriage because she knew it had a malicious purpose according to her mother's plans. Alternatively, maybe when she saw Gambanteinn she quickly understood that she had to get this sword to her mother (Aurboða-Gullveig) and that is why she changed her mind so abruptly. Her replies to Skírnir's first attempts to bribe her with gold and magical apples were cocky and confident, and then he threatens to decapitate her with Freyr's sword but yet she responds cockily to this as well. She has no reason to feel seriously threatened. She is the daughter of Aurboða and Gýmir, and sister to Beli who is explained to be of a dog-headed thurs-race (this I find particularly interesting as I connect this weird deformity with Aurboða's skill in transformation and werewolfism).

Moreover, the bridal payment of the sword has devastating consequences for the *ésir*, and it actually leads to a predestined victory of the thurses in the war against the *ésir* and their worlds. But how the sword went from Gýmir and Aurboða to Angrboða and her herder Eggþér in Járnsviðr is a mystery I will here divulge. It is obvious to me that Aurboða took the sword to Járnsviðr and to Angrboða; this is in my opinion a strong ground for understanding that they are the same giantess. The fact the Aurboða bewitched Freyr to sacrifice his sword is a typical action of Gullveig and Loki's character. The thing is that there is a big gap here in the sagas, nothing is told or even close to being revealed about how the sword went from Aurboða's yard to Angrboða's abode in Járnsviðr. This tells me that it must have been a common fact how this went down, and all the similarities between these giantesses are strikingly alike, both being of thurs-blood and married to very powerful and cruel thurses, and both having children that will have an essential purpose for the development

of the Ragna Røk mythos. They are also the only ones with a name ending with –*boða* in the ON mythology, they both have a herder sitting on a small mound keeping watch, they both are guarded by dogs/wolves, and last but not least Aurboða and Heiðr were the only giantesses ever that manage to nestle themselves into Ásgarðr, which connects them strongly and favors my belief that they all are the same as Gullveig.

In *Skírnismál* we find more interesting details; on Gýmir and Aurboða's yard which dwelt in the thursian abode in the underworld, a herder sat on a small mound and kept a watch in all directions. This herder reminds me very much of the herder sitting on watch on a small mound in Járnvíðr called *gygjar hirðir* (the giantess' herder) in *Völuspá* 42:

He, the giantess' herder, the happy Eggþér, sat upon the heap and played on the harp; above him in galgviðr crowed a light red rooster, his name was Fjalarr.¹

Gygjar hirðir being Angrboða's herder in her abode, his name is Eggþér. The latter being Angrboða's sword-watcher who keeps the Sword of Revenge for Surtr till Ragna Røk, and for some mystical reason the same kind of character sits on a small mound at Aurboða's abode in Jötunheimr according to *Skírnismál* 11:

Skírnir rode through Jötunheimr to Gýmir's yard. There were angry and leashed dogs in front of the path to the yard, where Gerðr dwelt. He rode up to where the herder sat and spoke to him:

Tell me, herder, who sits on the mound and watches over all:

How can I meet the young maid without the snarling dogs?

¹ See an investigation of galgviðr/gaglvíðr further down.

² Gräslund sees this connection in the history of religions; she says "in many respects dogs seem to be representatives of wolves." Gräslund, *Wolves, serpents, and birds: Their symbolic meaning in Old Norse belief*. In Andrén, Jennbert, Raudvere (eds), 2006, *Old Norse Religion in Long-Term Perspective*.

This in my opinion cannot be a coincidence; it's very strong evidence that Aurboða and Angrboða are the same. Even Aurboða's snarling dogs support this theory; Angrboða's abode in Járnvíðr is full of furious wolves and werewolves, and Aurboða's yard is guarded by my furious dogs. Dogs and wolves in the Old Norse mythology could mean the same². For example, it is said that all dogs come from Garmr in *Grímnismál*, *en hunda Garmr*. This proves not that he is a dog; he could easily have been a dog or a wolf, as all dogs come from the wolf originally. In *Völuspá* we can also read about Garmr:

Garmr barks greatly
from Gnípahellir;
the shackles shall shatter,
and the wolf shall be free.

This just tells us that Garmr barks greatly and that the wolf shall be freed. I agree that most likely it aims at Fenrir who is chained down with his father Loki in a cave until Ragna Røk and that this episode of *Völuspá* is referring to the beginning of the gods' doom. But still it does not say that it is actually Fenrir, it could be Garmr himself that will come free, because he is chained down too to the rocks of Gnípahellir at the gates of Helheimr. My point is, there is a widely spread hypothesis that Garmr and Fenrir are actually the same, but it is even more likely that Garmr and Hati are the same, and therefore the difference between a mythological dog and a wolf is not of great importance.

In the *Prose Edda*, Aurboða was called *úrsvöl gymis vólva*, the primevally cold one, referring to Aurboða-Gullveig's heart that will not burn because of its essence of primeval ice. It also points to her aspect as a storm-giantess, as she is depicted as the eastern storms from Járnvíðr (isarnviðr), see *Ynglinga saga*, this connects her with Angrboða the Old One:

Austr sat in aldna í Járnvíði ok fæddi þar Fenris kindir.¹

¹"In the east sat the Old One in the Ironwood and gave birth to Fenrir's children."

And as I stated above, more important information is dwelling in the same paragraph as *úrsvöl gymis vólva*: it is «*förir björn, þar er bára brestr, undinna festa, opt i ægis kjopta úrsvöl gymis vólva*», Gýmir's primevally cold witch often conveys ships in wild waves. This wind- or storming-aspect links Aurboða with the mythos of Hyrrokin; who pushed or blew Baldr's funeral ship out to sea as a favor to the gods for example. In my opinion, all that has been discussed in the previous pages proves why the storm-giantess Aurboða was in fact the spouse of the storm-giant Gýmir.





Angrboða

Austr sat in aldna
 í Járniði
 ok fœddi þar
 Fenris kindir
 – *Völuspá*

Angrboða is probably her most known name as the *völva*, crone -and mother- giantess in the dark woods called Járniðr; she is well-known as the shadow-draped giantess, *gýgr*, that comes with anger and hate towards the cosmos, the gods, and mankind. Angrboða is her infamous and antagonistic name as by now every living soul in the cosmos knows about her being the terrible witch-giantess who has only malignant intentions towards the worlds; She the Old One – In Aldna – Angrboða. This is after her terrible manifestations as Gullveig-Heiðr-Aurboða have been roving around in the worlds and wielding death and destruction to its very extent, and been caught and killed by the *áss*-powers. However, this threefold execution did not stop her from coming back as a witch-giantess; as we all know by now you don't really die in the Old Norse mythology, you kind of die out of the world in which you were presently living, and get sent to the world below. You can even die out of Helheimr, which means that you are sent down to the horrible world Niflheimr, which lies *beyond* the underworld.

So she came back a final time; in a final manifestation, as the notorious thursian giantess Angrboða. As she was done with her workings amongst the *ásir* in the heavens, she stayed in the underworld from then on as Angrboða – together with her mighty daughter Hel – and made preparations for the final infamous battle known as Ragna Røk. However, she still reached happily for receptive and wicked humans to teach them her proud craft and make alliances. Because her work is far from over: she wields the ferocious blackest magic from her black witch-seat within the abysmal jaws of Járnvíðr. Dark-red blood pours from her body under her black robe of darkness from freshly killed gods and men – blood that spatters on her surroundings when she moves her immense body and her long black icicled hair sways vehemently around the worlds – like a giant oak in a storm. She is the hating crone – wielding her anti-cosmic staff and singing wrathful runes; untying primordial knots on the giant roots of Heldrasill to unleash Chaos’ relentless curses. She is the Old one, older than age and creation – *anгрboða in aldna*. She is the wise one, wiser than the wells and the worlds – *anгрboða in vitra*. When Angrboða’s essence intruded the cosmic boundaries and got mixed with its structural flow she immediately adapted and took “form”, her essence struggled between lawlessness and manifestation, between freedom and framework. As she is a metamorphic thurs-essence, static form is absolutely unnatural for her and she cannot adjust to uniformity. So cosmic deformities is in her character and everything she touches and procreates becomes deformed and metamorphic; this is where she becomes the mother of werewolves and horrible monster-hordes in her blackest forest deep within Jötunheimr, in the east.

¹ Loki calls it Myrkviðr in *Lokasenna*, *Sæmundar Edda*.

Angrboða is her name during her habitation in Járnvíðr – as the Járngýgr, the giantess-ruler of this *Ironwood* also known as *Myrkviðr*¹.

As the mighty thurs-ruler of Járnvíðr and the mother of all troll-like deformed metamorphic monsters; she is proven to be the same as Gullveig. The sagas tell us about this in for example the *Völuspá in skamma*, which says:

Loki gave birth to the Wolf
with Angrboða
and Sleipnir
with Svaðílfari.

Amongst them all one crone
seemed worst,
she from Byleistr’s
brother came.



Loki ate a heart;
 on the burnt linden
 he found half-burnt
 a heart of a woman.
 Loptr became pregnant
 by the evil woman;
 from this have all
 troll come.

This excerpt is pretty much self-explanatory and shows that Angrboða is Gullveig. She was also looked upon as an evil woman (*illr kona*), and the mother of all troll (*flagð*) – troll which is the Old Norse term for malignant and bestial demons, viewed upon as a giant-kin, which are often dwellers of the forests, mountains and the underground. Troll being mythological offspring from Gullveig can be traced in the myths where the troll repeatedly shift shapes from deformed giants to human-looking individuals; they mimic the human appearance so they can get close to them to abduct them for different reasons. A common myth is that the troll shift shape into a beautiful young woman, half naked, to entice lumberjacks to follow them into the shadows. In Scandinavia this is common knowledge in its folklore. So the metamorphic nature of troll links them to their mythological source.

In *Völuspá* it is explained how “*she the old one*” sits in Járnvíðr and bears Fenrir’s kin (*Fenris kindir*):

In the east she the old one sat
 in Járnvíðr
 and there bore
 Fenrir’s kin.

The relatively odd episode that Angrboða is judged to be killed by the *ásir* and unsuccessfully burnt in the halls of Ásgarðr is a strong analogy between Angrboða and Gullveig, and it is unavoidable evidence that the myths are the same, and that Angrboða and Gullveig are the same giantesses. In *Helgakviða Hundingsbana I* we also find evidence of Angrboða’s analogy to Gullveig. In an argument between Sinþjótli and Guðmundr, Sinþjótli says:

You were a *völva*
 on Varinsey,
 a cunning woman,
 you lied.

* * *

you were, a hateful
 witch, a valkyria,
 spiteful, awful
 at Óðinn's.
 The Einherjar fought
 everybody
 for you,
 disgraceful woman,
 (they did it) for your sake.

Nine we
 at Sagu's point
 wolves bore,
 I was their father.

And Guðmundr's answer to this starts with: "Father to Fenrir-wolves you were not." This little extract from this saga tells us a lot. The cunning, hateful, and spiteful *völva* and mother to wolves must be Gullveig, as the author gives example of a witch that had been acting awful at Óðinn's hall. And that Einherjar, the *vanir*, have been fighting for her; for her cause – this cannot be anything else then the battle between the *ásir* and the *vanir*, called the first folk-war, after the killing of Gullveig in Ásgarðr, because this is the only battle that had taken place between them. That battle was about the *vanir*'s non-tolerance towards the *ásir*'s act of punishment and the killing of Gullveig without trial: so the *vanir* fought for Gullveig. In another saga it is said that Hrímnir's daughter had stayed at Varinsey for a time and pro-created werewolves – as we know, Hrímnir's daughter is Heiðr (Gullveig-Angrboða). And if this was not enough, Guðmundr's answer proves undoubtedly that it is Angrboða they are talking about – as we know that Angrboða is Fenrir's mother, and that she mothers his kin in the depths of Járnvíðr – «*austr sat in aldna í Járnvíði ok fæddi þar Fenris kindir*»¹ (*Völuspá* 40). Angrboða is the mother of the Fenrir-wolf family, which according to my studies and conclusions includes Garmr, Hróðvitnir, Hati and Sköll.

¹"In the east sat the Old One in the Ironwood and gave birth to Fenrir's children."

²*Snorra Edda, Nafnabulur* 42.

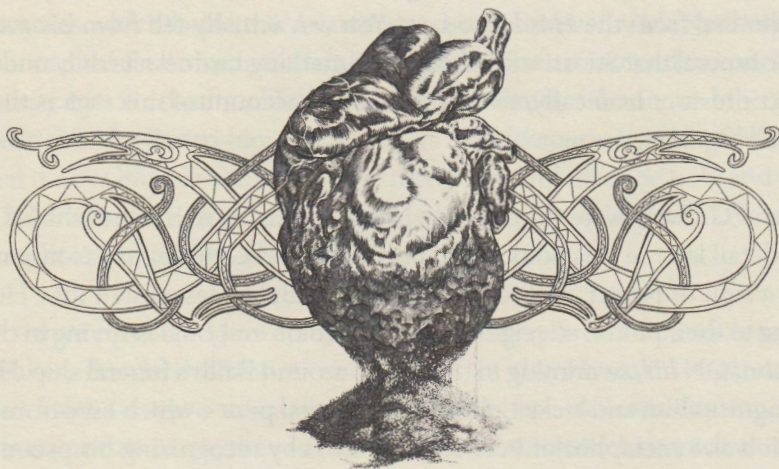
³*Skírnismál*.

KEEPER OF THE ANTI-COSMIC SWORD OF VENGEANCE AND EGGÞÉR

In the ON mythology, Angrboða in Járnvíðr is also the keeper of the anti-cosmic sword of vengeance, made by Loki and perfected by Þjazi for Surtr. Fjalarr, the son

of Surtr, will come as a red rooster and pick up the sword of vengeance called by many names: *gambanteinn*, *hævateinn*, *homateinn*, *mistilteinn*², *tamsteinn*, and *tamsvendi*³. He will come on his father's orders right before the final battle – the day of wrath – Ragna Røk. Fjalarr is a Múspell-son, a blazing fire-thurs who will also come as devastating wild-fire; thus his kenning “the red rooster.”





Hyrrokin

Hyrrokin, “the flame smoked” – the name is created from the Old Norse words *hyrr*, fire, and *rjúka*, smoke, which is the accurate one in my book; an epithet taken from the Gullveig-mythos where she is being held over the *ásir*-gods’ unclean and smoky fires. There is also an alternative spelling, *Hyrrokkin*. However, the use of a double “k” is erroneous if you base the name on the word *rjúka*¹.

There is only one saga about Hyrrokin that has survived and it is about her appearance during Baldr’s funeral; the original saga is from an anthology called *Húsdrápa* by Úlfr Uggason. The interesting part is that the *Húsdrápa*-sagas were written down as interpretations of sculptures or illustrations carved into wood in a mighty hall; the *Laxdæla saga* tells us that a new grand hall was built and all of its interior embellished with illustrations of ON mythological sagas and legends. Úlfr Uggason was the poet who got the job of putting these illustrations into words as poems. This actually explains *Húsdrápa*’s occasionally confusing sections, and it definitely explains Snorri’s puzzling depiction in his account of the Baldr’s

¹ See under *rjúka* in *An Icelandic-English Dictionary* by Cleasby and Vigfusson 1874, and Heggstad, Hødnebo, Simensen, 2008, *Norrøn Ordbok*. Also Bugge, 1881-89, *Studier over de Nordiske Gude- og Heltesagns Oprindelse I*, p. 221, footnote 4. And Rydberg, 1889, *Undersökningar i Germanisk Mythologi II*.

Funeral mythos – because it is obvious that Snorri has taken his mythos about Baldr’s Funeral from the *Húsdrápa*-saga. You can actually tell from his account of the Baldr-funeral that Snorri tries to depict something he doesn’t really understand; thus its confusion. Ironically, the most detailed account of this saga is the one in Snorri’s *Gylfaginning*.

Loki and Gullveig were the brains behind the murder of Baldr – which I will disclose in detail later in this book – and both Loki and Gullveig had to attend his funeral as a sign of power, and to make sure that Baldr descended into Helheimr, according to their plot. Gullveig arrives as Hyrrokin and Loki is spying in the shape of a salmon, ON *litr*, swimming in the waters around Baldr’s funeral ship. However, Þórr recognizes him and kicks Loki into the funeral pyre – which I see from Snorri’s description as a metaphor of Þórr spotting Loki by recognizing his pseudo-shape as a salmon, (this would be the second time in the myths that Þórr catches Loki as a salmon), and strips off the pseudo-shape of Loki and turns him back into his regular fiery shape (or it might even have been a self-explanatory allegorization that he kicks him back into Múspellzheimr, from whence Loki came.)

Snorri tells us that when the gods had the funeral for Baldr they placed his body in his ship Hringhorni, which was a mighty vessel, and when they were about to put it to sea with a funeral pyre they could not move the ship, it was simply too heavy. So the gods called for Hyrrokin from Jötunheimr to help them put the ship into the water. She came riding on a giant wolf with snakes as reins, and the wolf was so big and strong that Óðinn sent for four berserker-warriors to hold down the wild wolf, but it just threw them to the ground. In due course they got the beast to fall on his side. This could not be a regular wolf; Snorri called it a horse, ON *hestr*, and the *áesir* had struggled with getting an extremely strong wolf to be bound before; and that is Fenrir, Gullveig’s son. In my opinion it is unmistakable that this is a fragment from that myth and that this giant-wolf is supposed to be Fenrir, which means that this is the second time the *áesir* struggles with Fenrir with the intention of binding him. When Hyrrokin went up to the ship she launched it out to sea with her very first push or blow, and it went out to sea with such speed fires flamed from under the ship and the rollers – and all land quaked. Þórr, the grumpy one, at once grabbed his hammer to strike her dead, obviously in envy, but the gods begged him to restrain himself and he did. With the metaphor that Hyrrokin dragged Hringhorni into the sea we understand that the author of this myth wanted to make sure that it was understood that Gullveig wanted Baldr dead, and she succeeded. A few lines later Snorri explains that in front of Þórr a “dwarf” named Litr came swimming, and Þórr by an obscure reason kicked the “dwarf” into the funeral pyre, and the dwarf burned. This is such an odd detail that there had to be a deeper meaning to

this little factor. The confusion of Littr being a dwarf has its explanation in *Völuspá's* list of dwarves which holds the dwarf-name Littr. However, with Rydberg's help I am convinced this is a misunderstanding and that Snorri jumped to conclusions a bit too easily. Littr is actually a bi-name for Loki meaning salmon, and this Loki-epithet is also used by Snorri himself in Snorri's *Skáldskaparmál* 51. So to know indirectly that it was Gullveig and Loki who killed Baldr and then see Loki and Gullveig around Baldr's funeral-ship makes it easy to see the author's point: Loki and Gullveig brought Baldr to Helheimr.

Giants were often allegorized as sublime nature-phenomena such as storms, earth-quakes, floods, volcanoes, and winter. In the Hyrrokin-saga she is the metaphor for the eastern storm; eastern because her essence is continuously described to come from *austr*, the east, she also came from Jötunheimr which is located in the east. The mighty push by Hyrrokin on the ship Hringhorni is obviously thought of as a strong wind, so strong not even Þórr could match his strength. Calling for an antagonist to help them bury their dead is of course very humiliating for the *ásir*. And even worse, this antagonist helped to murder their beloved Baldr. Note that it's not unusual for giants and gods to help each other, but Gullveig and Loki never had a benevolent intention with their "assistance".

There is also one interesting detail in the saga *Helgakviða Hjörvarðssonar* where Heðinn, son of the Norwegian king Hjörvard, was on his way home and went through the woods on Yule day, and there he met a "troll-woman" who rode a wolf and had snakes as reins. She asked to keep him company, but he declined, which made her obviously upset and she told him that he would pay for that at the vows later that night. "Troll-women" are the same as giantesses, but they are called by all kinds of surnames; *flagð*, *skass*, *fála* etc. And this "troll-woman" is either Hyrrokin-Gullveig or a Járnvíðja, a female dweller of Járnvíðr, as this way of depicting a giantess is so rare it could not be anything else. Bugge though says; «*det er hans broder Hognes fylgje*¹», "it is his brother Hognes's fylgja", which I'm not sure I could agree with.

¹ Bugge, 1881-89, *Studier over de Nordiske Gude- og Heltesagns Oprindelse I*.

Hyrrokin is also mentioned in *Skáldskaparmál* 11 in a list of giants and giantesses that Þórr had killed; this which Snorri had borrowed from the fragments found by Þorbjörn Dísarskáld's sagas. This is a big mystery as it is not told about this anywhere else in any saga. So we must accept that there probably was a saga, which now is lost forever, about Þórr killing Hyrrokin-Gullveig.



A Sæmundar Edda-Study on Gullveig

A big part of the ON mythology derives from the *Eddas*, and there are two *Eddas*. The elder one is called the *Sæmundar Edda*, which is found in the small book called *Codex Regius*. This *Edda* is also called the *Poetic Edda* and *Codex Regius* is from approximately the late 1200 AD – it is a collection of peculiar poetic sagas, and the ON mythological poems in this book are appreciated to have been composed between the years 800-1000 AD. *Sæmundar Edda* is the most reliable source as it is older and most likely written with fewer Christian influences, but the content of *Codex Regius* is a transcription from earlier originals, which can easily lead to suspicion of errors and modifications.

The second *Edda* is called *Snorra Edda* (Snorri's *Edda*) or the *Prose Edda*; the *Younger Edda*. This manuscript was written by Snorri Sturluson around the year 1220 AD. This version is, in my opinion, less reliable because Snorri was a Christian and he certainly brought his Christian influences with him into the writing of this book, (he was a missionary, and he did not write this book primarily to hold on to the Old heathen belief, he wrote it to show off his skill in e.g. ON poetic meter.) What makes this *Edda* different from the elder one is Snorri's own version of the *Edda*, which he calls *Gylfaginning*. He also added the books *Skáldskaparmál* and *Háttatal* to this manuscript. It is here where my doubts mostly lay; his Christian influences are obvious in his *Gylfaginning*, which is in itself a very exciting mythological saga, but it embellishes the original mythology too much.

This chapter is fundamentally made from the *Sæmundar Edda*. It is important to know that I have focused on the *Poetic Edda*, but also studied the *Prose Edda*, because I strongly suspect Snorri's *Edda* to be inaccurate because of the Christian influences, and that makes the sagas in Snorri's version falsified: nothing would make me trust a Christian.

So in my investigations I have used, amongst others, Heimskringla's on-line collection of Old Norse literature and material, Bugge's *Edda*-work from 1867, Rydberg's in depth *Edda*-studies from 1886–89, and sundry translations into modern

Swedish of both *Eddas* from authors like Brate, Thall, Collinder and Ohlmarks. I would like to add that I will not go through all of the *Sæmundar Edda*-sagas from *Codex Regius* in this book, because some of them have nothing or so little to do with Gullveig as to be irrelevant as I see it.

VØLUSPÁ

Völuspá means the prophecy of the *völva*, and *völva* means a wand-bearer believed to be a prophetess, seeress, and a wise woman – a woman having magical powers (the wand or staff was a symbol of this.) The *völva* had another known and common name too and that was *heiðr*, often translated as seeress, prophetess and witch.

Something that needs to be kept in mind when it comes to the *völva*-*heiðr* is that she was a respected figure in the ON society; she was not the kind of witch reading tarot-cards we have today, nor as depicted in the witch-hunts during the late middle ages. No, she was a worshipper of the giants/gods and was in an extremely close contact with these powers, its entity entangled her everyday life – that was her full purpose of existence. She was the representative in human form of the giants/gods, and back in those days *nothing* was more respected than the giants and gods.

¹ In *An Icelandic-English Dictionary* by Cleasby and Vigfusson *troll* is explained to mean giant, fiend, demon; “the heathen creed knew of no ‘devil’ but the troll”; and *troll* is even explained to be a werewolf, one possessed by troll or demons, and a destroyer.

The prophecy starts with the *völva* remembering her lineage: *I remember giants in the primordial times that fostered me.* She is saying that she is a descendent from the *primordial* giants, and among the *primordial* giants are no gods, as they were not yet spawned. This brings me to the conclusion that she is a giantess; and in this investigation it is important to observe that the *Edda* states that she is fostered by “giants” (*jötna*) in plural as in parents. So this far she is called a giantess-*völva* born in the earliest days of creation, and that definitively crosses out the possibility

and a common hypothesis that this prophecy was made by the *norns* as a triad of women of fate (*Urðr*, *Verðandi*, *Skuld* – believed as being past, present and future), because 1) *norns* are not *vølvas*, and 2) *norns* are not archetypal giants, they are more *ásir*-like in nature without genetic deformities or malevolent traits. So who could this giantess-*völva* be? Snorri might help us in his added list of “troll-women” (*trøllkvenna*) as he calls them¹, meaning *vølvas* or *heiðrs*, and giantesses. Furthermore, as some of these names are known giantesses and the names themselves are links to adversaries and giants, we can assume that most of these names belong to giantesses and giantess-*vølvas*:

1. Skalk trollkvinna telja heiti. Gríðr ok Gnissa, Grýla, Brýja, Glumra, Geitla, Gríma ok Bakrauf, Guma, Gestilja, Grottintanna.	Hryðja, Hveðra ok Hölgabruðr. 3. Hríngerðr, Hæra, Herkja, Fála, Ímð, Járnsaxa, Íma, Fjölvor, Mörn, Íviðja, Ángerðr, Simul, Sívör, Skríkja, Sveipinfalda.	ok Járnyiðja, Margerðr, Atla, Eisurfála, Leikn, Munnharpa ok Myrkriða. 5. Leirvör, Ljóta ok Loðinfingra, Kráka, Varðrún ok Kjallandi, Vigglöð, Þurbörð - viljum nefna Rýgi síðarst ok Rifingöflu.
2. Gjölþ, Hyrrokkin, Hengikepta, Gneip ok Gnepja, Geysa, Hála, Hörn ok Hríga, Harðgreip, Forað,	4. Öflugbarða ok Járnglumra, Ímgerðr, Áma	

Hyrrokkin is of course Gullveig and she is a known giantess. Then two of Gullveig's daughters are in this list, first we have Gerðr, Gullveig's beautiful humanoid giantess-daughter whose name could mean armor¹, and some of the names in this list are linking Gullveig's essence to the name of Gerðr.

For example Hríngerðr², which means Gerðr of rime, it could refer to Gullveig's rime-essence and origin (*hrímønd*), and in *Helgakviða Hjörvarðssonar* Hríngerðr is allegorized as a water-giantess (she's called *hála*, *skass*, *fála*, and *gífr*), guardian of Hatafjörðr and daughter of a giant called Hati. Both Hríngerðr and Hati are said to be nocturnal entities (Hati the moon-wolf hunts only during the night, but it might have been another giant called Hati.). She is the most interesting for my Gullveig studies because of her role, name and qualities. Her father is called Hati and he is a very mighty giant: «*Hríngerðr ek heiti, Hati hét minn faðir, þann víska ek á máttkastan jötun*», "My name is Hríngerðr, Hati is my father, the mightiest giant I've known." Hati is also a moon-chasing wolf-son of Gullveig, and as it is said and known Gullveig breeds with her sons in Járnyiðr, so Hríngerðr could most likely be the daughter of Gullveig and Hati. Furthermore, in the part called *Hríngerðarmál* Atli accuses Hríngerðr of having come up through the abyss and trying to destroy the captain's

¹ Her mother's name means "war-giantess", who dwells in the "iron wood". As iron could be looked upon as meaning "weapon", all these names are very much alike.

² See the very important study of *Hríngerðr* in S. Bugge, 1896, *De Nordiske Gude- og Heltesagns Oprindelse II Helge-Digtene*.

ship and give the crew to Rán, the sea-giantess. However, Hrímgæðr calls Atli a fool and says that it was her mother, not herself. So who is her mother then that comes up from the abyss?¹ The myth does not say, but by a mysterious reason, a few stanzas away, a giantess is riding in the woods on a wolf with snakes as reins on Yule day. This is without doubt an inspiration of Gullveig under the name Hyrrokín. Equally, if you take a look at all the connections to Gullveig in this short passage in the *Helgakviða Hjörvarðssonar*, the author must have had Gullveig, the moon-wolf and her daughter Gerðr as influences for these characters.

¹ For a more detailed account on Gullveig and the water connection see the chapter on Gullveig's names and epithets.

² Ímgerðr is not mentioned anywhere in the *Eddas*, so she most definitely belongs to a lost saga.

³ It is probably related to the Old Icelandic word *amma* which means "grandmother".

⁴ Liljenroth, *Den Götiska Gudin-
nan I Nordisk Mytologi*, and
Hellquist, 1939, *Svensk Etymol-
ogisk Ordbok*.

Ímgerðr², which means Gerðr of ember – referring to Gerðr glowing like the sun, by the witchcraft of her mother Gullveig; also Ámgerðr which means Mother-Gerðr or more likely mother of Gerðr which refers to Gullveig herself, because Gerðr does not have any children in the sagas and nor is she known for being connected to a mother-aspect. Lastly, we have the name Margerðr which most certainly means Gerðr the maid or Gerðr of the ocean. This ON *mar-* could also derive from the ON verb *merja*, to crush, and then Margerðr would mean Gerðr the crusher – which goes well with a) the warlike translation "armor" of her name, and b) her connection to water/ice (see Hrímgæðr and the chapter on Gullveig's names and epithets.) *Mar-* could also derive from ON *marr*, a steed.

Then we have Leikn which is a name for Hel's more chthonic and pestilent aspect, which is explained to be a later development of her characteristics – I am not sure though about that, because Hel as a ruler of the dead and Niflheimr was most likely very early considered to be the influence of pestilent epidemics. This does not mean that Helheimr had to be Hel's equivalence. There have been many discussions about Leikn being Hel, but in my book they share essence, attributes and manifestations. The same goes for the name Áma³, it means "mother" and is a very old name for Hel⁴. Then we have Gullveig's demon-children from Járniðr who are said to be spawned by Gullveig and Fenrir, but most likely these children were just spawned by Gullveig alone, and they are called *járniðja* and *myrkriða*; they are she-troll/giantesses.

Many of the names and epithets in the list are from, as of today, unknown mythological characters, withered sources lost by time; or rather burnt and destroyed by the Christian church while invading the north. However, the names indicate giant-

related words. Most often their names derive from an epic in the mythological sagas, for instance the name Hyrrokin which derives from the epic when Gullveig was burnt by smoky (impure) flames, hence Hyrrokin – the flame smoked.

Well, could any giantess-*völva* in this list be the one prophesying in *Völuspá*? The only known one in the list that would fit is Hyrrokkin- Hyrrokin. I will also take a look at other known giantesses (*völv*as or not) that might be relevant:

I) Sinmara – the black one (*surtrar*)¹ and the pale giantess (after her mysterious epithet *hin fólva gýgr*), she is only named two times throughout the whole *Sæmundar Edda* in the saga called *Fjölsvinnsmál*. She is said there to be the keeper of the sword called *Lævateinn*, i.e. *Gambanteinn*; the sword of revenge that Surtr will burn down the world with, it is also called here “the shining scythe.” She keeps it in an iron-chest with nine locks. Sin means tendon, and mara means “the mutilating one”, mara derives from the verb *merja*, so Sinmara means roughly “the one who mutilates by ripping out tendons”.² She is not spoken of as *völva*, and there are no analogies whatsoever between her and the narrator of *Völuspá*.

II) There is also the nine-fold of giantesses that bore Heimdall. They are just mentioned in *Edda's* saga *Völuspá in skamma*: Gjálp, Greip, Eistla, Eyrgjafa, Ulfrun, Angeyia, Imðr, Atla, and Járnsaxa. Imðr is also mentioned in *Helgakviða Hundingsbana I* as having a daughter, but I am not even sure this is the same as the one of the nine-fold. Other than this they are not spoken of and there is no reason to believe that they would be the giantess-*völva* that I am looking for.

III) Hyndla is a giantess-maid, a wise-woman, that the song *Hyndluljóð* is about. Hyndla is in my opinion analogous to Aurboða-Gullveig, and she is *only* mentioned by the name Hyndla in *Hyndluljóð*.

IV) *Nál* or *Laufey* is a very mysterious character and very little-known. She is only mentioned and referred to as “Loki’s mother” twice in the *Sæmundar Edda*: in *Lokasenna* and in *Þrymskviða*. She is mentioned just once in *Skáldskaparmál* and *Gylfaginning*, and also here just referred to as “Loki’s mother”:

¹ Ohlmarks, Brate, and Thall translate this as Surtr. This is probably where people got the idea that Sinmara is Surtr’s wife; my personal theory about this matter is split, as no other mythological evidence supports that they belong together.

² Cleasby-Vigfusson, 1874, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*. I consider the connection between the names Sinmara and Margerðr interesting, but I will not go further about that here.

³ *Skáldskaparmál* 23.

⁴ *Gylfaginning* 33.

Svá, at kalla hann son Fárbauda ok Laufeyjar, Nálár³.

Móðir hans heitir Laufey eða Nál⁴.

In *Søría Þáttur* 2 she is also just brought up as “Loki’s mother”:

Maðr hét Fárbauti. Hann var karl einn ok átti sér kerlingu þá, er Laufey er nefnd.
Hún var bæði mjó ok auðpreiflig; því var hún Nál kölluð. Þau áttu sér einn son
barna. Sá var Loki nefndr.

Laufey could mean “a leafy island”, which supposedly is a metaphor for the tree-crown. Nál means needle; I have come across some other theories about the meaning of her name, but since I have not found any good support for their authenticity I will not bring them up here. Over and over I see these forced explanations for her name which are mostly hypotheses deriving from ignorance, misunderstandings and uncertainties. The same goes for her mythological appearance. Thus, I have not really found any strong enough evidence to support that she could be the giantess-völva seering about the world’s fate in *Völuspá*.

V) Sigyn is referred to in *Völuspá* as “Loki’s wife” and the same in *Lokasenna* where she caught the poison pouring from a snake’s fangs with a bowl, preventing it from dripping in Loki’s face. The same story but more detailed can be found in *Gylfaginning*. In *Skáldskaparmál* she’s in a list over *ásynjur* together with Gerðr, and in the list over *Lokakenningar* as “Loki’s wife” (*ver Sigynjar*). That’s about it, and I definitely do not see any connection here.

VI) Hel is a giantess, but not known as a *völva*, and she is not said to have any seering traits either, even if she is Gullveig’s most known daughter. So I cannot see any reason for it to be Hel.

VII) Rán the giantess of the waves – the ocean waves were symbolized as nine sisters; her daughters: Himinglæfa, Dúfa, Blóðughadda, Kólga, Hefring, Unr, Hrönn, Bylgia, Dröfn. And as Hel, she is more of a giantess ruling over the dead than a seering *völva*. The only one that fits this description is the giantess described in the *Völuspá* itself, stanza 22:

Heiðr her name was,
to houses she came,
the seeress with adequate prophecies.
She wielded witchcraft,
she conjured disease,
she invoked Leikin,
always was she loved
by wicked women.

As we know, *Heiðr* is one of *Gullveig*'s known names and she got that name from her crone (*völva/heiðr*) aspect. Furthermore, I am pretty sure that the *Völuspá*-stanza 21 and 22 belong to each other. Stanza 21 introduces *Gullveig* and explains how she was killed and became the reason for starting the first war (*folkvíg*) in the world. Stanza 22 explains how she returned as *Heiðr* and as a crone (*völva/heiðr*). If I put them together it is even more obvious; I start where the stanza 21 ends:

Thrice they burned
the thrice reborn,
often, not seldom,
yet she lives.
Heiðr her name was,
to houses she came,
the seeress with accurate prophecies.

After this investigation I think I can conclude that it is fair to designate *Gullveig* as the narrating giantess-*völva* or prophetess of the *Völuspá*, as *Gullveig* is called *gýgr*, giantess, and *völva*, seeress.

As for her essence within this saga, I will thoroughly investigate it and expose my conclusions in this book.

SKÍRNISMÁL

This is the saga where *Freyr* sits up in the tower *Hliðskjálf* in *Ásgarðr* and spies into *Jötunheimr*, seeing there the most beautiful maid of them all; the giantess *Gerðr*, daughter of *Gýmir* and *Aurboða*. As she was walking in her father's yard, *Freyr* was bewitched and told his servant *Skírnir* to go to her and to woo her on *Freyr*'s behalf. And he does so, at first with promising gifts and in the end with threats. At first *Gerðr* refuses, but eventually she agrees.

This saga is very important because it holds clues to the *Gambanteinn*-mythos¹; the *Gambanteinn* is the epithet for the sword that *Surtr*, during *Ragna Røk*, will burn all of the worlds with, and this sword is quick-wittedly snatched out of *Freyr*'s hands without him knowing what this bargain will result in.² This deed is carried out by the thurses, namely *Gullveig* and her allies. As *Aurboða*-*Gullveig* receives the sword *Gambanteinn* and takes it to the Ironwood, *Járnviðr*, and lets her ally and

¹ This "sword of revenge" or "sword of victory" has different epithets in the sagas: *Gambanteinn* (the sumptuous sprout; -teinn was an ON poetic metaphor for a sword or a wand, *gambanteinn* is used in *Skírnismál*, and compare it to the later used word *gambanreiði* in the same saga), *Hævateinn*/*Homateinn* (it might mean the splendid sprout, used in *Fjölsvinnsmál*), *Mistilteinn* (the mistletoe sprout, used in *Snorra Edda*, *Nafnaþulur* 42 as a sword epithet), and *Tamsvöndr* (the taming wand, used in *Skírnismál*).

² See *Lokasenna*.

beast-herder Eggþér keep it until Surtr's son will come as a red rooster and get it for him in the dawn of Ragna Røk. The Gambanteinn-mythos will be further explored in other parts of this book.

Skírnismál tells us how Gerðr is the bargain and thursian sacrifice to win this important sword Gambanteinn; she is in fact bought with gold and traded for the sword. A more detail account of this saga is to be found in the chapter on Aurboða below.

HÁRBARDSLJÓÐ

There is actually only one small detail I want to bring up in this saga and it is when Þórr explains that he fought *vargynjor*, wolf-women, on the Danish island called Hléysey, and not regular berserk-women¹. As it is told that Gullveig is the mother

¹ Compare this to the *ylgr*, the she-wolf that comes at mid-night to kill and eat warriors in *Völsunga Saga* in this book.

and fosterer of all wolves and werewolves, these wolf-women spoken of must be of her descent. Þórr is known to be out killing and fighting giantesses and these wolf-women are most likely of a giant-race. The reason why I bring this small detail up is that I want to underline that the belief in werewolves and their strength was intense and it derived from a belief in thursian

troll-like monsters. If Þórr had to fight them and not just slaughtered them it means that they could stand their ground and only prime giants were powerful enough to fight Þórr. These are female versions of Fenrir, Hati and Sköll; unrelenting, uncontrolled and wrathful beasts that have tremendous strength. They are amorphous and rabid powers, metaphors for destruction and force (this is why death-runes are used within their evocations.) Their amorphous nature is a shadow of their true essence; they are so connected to the acosmic Chaos in spirit that they shift from wrath to pseudo-control unrestrainedly. Form cannot dominate them – but they can dominate form. This wild and uncontrolled side of their spirits comes from Gullveig, as she is the manifestation of an un-natural existence. We can compare that to the untamed spiritual essence of Lilith.

LOKASENNA

Lokasenna is a very entertaining saga, as it tells us much about the bad side of many *ásir*. In Gýmir's hall most of the *ásir* have come to enjoy Gýmir's excellent mead; the *ásir* praise his two servants very much for their service. But Loki loathed and

killed one of them because of it, which reminds me very much of the saga of Baldr's death. This made the *æsir* upset and hard words were exchanged. Loki was of course superior in this game and humiliated and silenced each and every one of them.

To follow up the context of this book, I would like to put emphasis on Loki's accusations towards Freyja. He accuses her of being a witch involved in much witchcraft, «þú ert fordæða ok meini blandin mjök»¹, "you are a witch and much involved in it." *Fordæða* is seen as a witch in the worst sense, and for her being accused of practicing this kind of witchcraft, *fordæðuskapr*, is of course intended to remind them all that Aurboða-Gullveig once served Freyja as her maid and lured her into the arts of *fordæðuskapr*. This was a big tragedy for Ásgarðr and they burned Aurboða-Gullveig for this when the *æsir* realized what was going on between Freyja and the treacherous and evil Aurboða-Gullveig.

As in so many other places in the sagas this has been totally overlooked and misinterpreted; these words by Loki have been interpreted as Freyja being in fact Gullveig, but this is of course false and dim-witted. Freyja is the opposite of Gullveig.

¹ Lokasenna 32.

² Here Garmr is connected to Hel as her ally and champion.

³ See appendix for my map of the underworld.

BALDRS DRAUMAR (VEGTAMSKVIÐA)

In *Baldrs Draumar* it is said that Óðinn rides down into the underworld, towards Niflhel, «niðr þaðan niflheljar til», and to Hel's house, *Heljar rann*. Garmr came running at him, bloody and baying, from Hel's abode, «mætti hann hvelpi, þeim er ór helju kom».² At Hel's gate he turned off to the east where he knew that the *völva* he was seeking laid (buried): «þá reið Óðinn fyrir austan dyrr, þar er hann vissi völu leið». Óðinn rode towards Niflhel, which here could be an epithet for Hel, Nifl-Hel, as she is chief ruler of Niflheimr; he came to Hel's house where he turned to the east to visit the *völva*. Geographically this does not make much sense to me, but I assume that he went to the east as that is where the infamous Ironwood is explained to be located, and to make an analogy it is safe to say 'to the east' for everybody to understand that it is Jötunheimr and Járniðr we are dealing with. At the same time it is not too misleading, because if we say that Óðinn arrived at Hel's abode in Helheimr – which is much more likely than if he would have ended up in Niflheimr in Chaos (!) – it could be imagined according to map³ and understanding that to the north-east the snowy realm of Járniðr would be located in the sagas. I am pretty swayed that it is there where Óðinn is supposed to find the *völva*.

Nonetheless, he arrived at the *völva*'s grave in the east and sang a death-*gald*r (an incantation) to her, and thereby she was forced against her will to rise from the dead and speak with him. This is actually one of the few known evidence of the fact that the people of the Old Norse believed in this sort of necromancy and the black art of making the dead rise. Through this stanza we can learn that if you have the proper runic *gald*r, runic magic formula, you could actually raise the dead from their grave. The stanza says «*nam hann vittugri valgald*r *kveða, unz nauðig reis*». Óðinn orders the *völva* to speak from the dead, *segðu mér ór helju*, and he tries to get as much information out of her about Baldr's death as he can, as he keeps telling her to speak up and not to be silent; «*þegj-at-tu, vólva, þik vil ek fregna, unz alkunna, vil ek enn vita*». Like *Völuspá* and *Völuspá in skamma* she seers about the future, but this time about the murder of Baldr, and determinedly she tries to be released of the death-*gald*r so she can return, «*nauðug sagðak, nú mun ek þegja*». As the last but one stanza divulges, the *völva* is Gullveig, «*ert-at-tu vólva né vís kona, heldr ertu þriggja þursa móðir*», "you are the mother of the three thurses", and then with the knowledge that Gullveig and Loki were the ones behind the plot in murdering Baldr (see my chapter on Baldr's death below) this interview with Óðinn seems to force Gullveig to reveal her and Loki's plans, «*nauðug sagðak, nú mun ek þegja*», "forced am I to speak, now shall I remain silent". But still, amazingly, Óðinn does not get it, and during the day of Baldr's death, he watches Loki make Høðr kill Baldr.

The *völva* says to Óðinn that she has been laying there dead for a long time: «*Var ek snivin snævi ok slegin regni ok drifin döggu, dauð var ek lengi*». Then there comes something very interesting; the *völva* says that "here the brewed mead for Baldr is kept, the ethereal brew with a shield upon it, the sons of the gods are eagerly awaited (*en ásmegir í ofvæni*)". Remember now that they are in the eastern parts of the underworld, which could only mean that they are somewhere in Jötunheimr, and most likely in Járnvíðr. Gullveig is a rime-thurs, whose grave has been snowed on, and she is supposedly dead in this episode, or has metaphorically descended into the realm of the dead and giants, which is not the same as being dead for a giant; remember that Gullveig, as Loki, is known to walk between the worlds at will. This can of course be confusing for someone unknowledgeable in the subject and with mediocre eyes look upon as "the dead lie in graves."

Equally, what she meant with "the sons of the gods are eagerly awaited" must be referring to Baldr and Høðr who will both be killed and sent to the underworld; Baldr by Høðr, and Høðr by Váli, which Gullveig foresees in stanzas 9 and 11. She is obviously a well-respected *völva* with a much grander ability to foresee the future than Óðinn himself, because he rides on the road deep down in the underworld

where most of the terrible, wrathful and mighty rime-thurses dwell, just to wake her from her Hel-slumber and ask for her knowledge to foresee Baldr's destiny.

Grimm wrote on the same thing as me in his work *Teutonic Mythology*. He says: "*var ek snifin sniðfi* (by snow), *ok slegin regni, ok drifin döggo* (by dew), *dauð* (dead) *var ek leingi*; it is among the sublimest things the *Edda* has to shew. This vala must stand in close relationship to Hel herself." In my opinion, this whole myth about this mysterious *völva* is entangled in elements that remind me of Gullveig. Since I totally agree with Grimm that this *völva* must be in a close relationship with Hel, I will here lay my theories:

1. She is laying in a grave in the east. Gullveig's abode or realm Járnvíðr lays in the east and she is also called the giantess of the eastern storms.

2. She is a mighty *völva*, a seeress, mightier in knowledge and to seer than Óðinn himself. The myths give details that there are only a few mythological characters that are wiser than Óðinn, one of them is Gullveig.

3. She is allegorized as dead and buried, and Óðinn seems to know exactly where to find her; this could be a self-explanatory testimony of when the *ásir* killed Gullveig three times, sent her to the realms of death in the underworld and thereby believed to have been "buried".

4. The *völva* has the answer to all of his questions and she knows everything about Baldr's murder, Høðr's deed and their journey to the underworld. She knows because she is the one planning the whole strategic deed to murder Baldr, use Høðr, and to provoke Ragna Røk.

5. And as the last and strongest proof of my theory I will quote what is said in the end of their conversation in *Baldrs Draumar*; Óðinn says: *<heldr ertu þriggja þursa móðir>*, "you are rather the mother of the three thurses"; hence the mother of Jörmungandr, Fenrir and Hel, which is Gullveig. There is no other thurs-mother with three known thurs-children.

HYNDLULJÓÐ AND VØLUSPÁ IN SKAMMA

Hyndluljóð and *Völuspá in skamma*, "the smaller *Völuspá*", are supposedly two separate poems, which have been thought of as one. *Hyndluljóð* is suspected of having a

manifold of additions to its saga and therefore viewed as distorted¹. Even so, with this knowledge at hand, Hyndla is described as a very wise woman who lives in a cave amongst rocks, «í helli býr», Hyndla has there in her abode a stable with wolves, «taktu ulf þinn einn af stalli». In stanza 4 it is indirectly said that Hyndla is a giantess:

¹ See commentary on Hyndluljóð in Brate, 1913, *Sämunds Edda*.

Þórr mun hon blóta,
þess mun hon biðja,
at hann æ við þik
einart láti;
þó er hánúm ótítt
við jötuns brúðir.

"To Þórr I shall sacrifice and pray that to you always be honest; though he does not favor giantesses."

The poem is about when Freyja goes to Hyndla's cave to ask for a favor, Freyja promises her wealth, but Hyndla sees through her lie immediately. In the very beginning of the song Freyja calls Hyndla "you maid of maids", «*mær meyja*», and "my friend and sister", «*mín vina, Hyndla systir*». This implies an intimate and close relationship, which makes me think of Freyja's shocking relationship with Aurboða-Gullveig. Furthermore, if Hyndla is supposed to be Aurboða this means that Freyja knew that Aurboða was a giantess and still Freyja tried to get Hyndla to go with her to Valhöll – into Ásgarðr. She even promises Hyndla that she would make Þórr think good of her – even when the fact that Hyndla was a giantess – with the means of *blót*, worship, and *biðja*, prayer, which could have been thought of as means of witchcraft; something not surprising since we already know that Aurboða taught Freyja as Freyja's maid in Ásgarðr.

Hyndla means dog and she has wolves that she rides in her stable; this is a typical trait for witches, *flögð*, troll-woman, in the ON folklore and mythology. Garmr is explained as being a dog and at the same time he shared qualities with the thursian wolves Fenrir, Hati and Sköll; the latter two are explained in *Gylfaginning* 12 to be son's of Fenrir and Gullveig. Hati is there called Hati Hróðvitnisson – «*Hati, hann er Hróðvitnis sonr*» in *Grímnismál* 39 –, son of Hróðvitnir (Hróðvitnir is another of Fenrir's names). My point is that in *Gylfaginning* 12 Hati is called by the epithet Má-nagarmr, "the moon's Garmr", which influences me into believing that Garmr is a thursian wolf-son to Fenrir and Gullveig as well, and that dog is just another word for the wolf-guardian of the underworld, as dogs are used by humans to guard their grounds – which as a hypothesis could mean that the Old Norse people thought

wolves and dogs were very much connected. I believe Hyndla is supposed to be an epithet for her wolfish nature: “the she-wolf.”

All of these details depicted in *Hyndluljóð* remind me very much of Gullveig, e.g. the relationship between Freyja and Gullveig as in the saga of Aurboða as Freyja’s maid; the fact that Hyndla means dog or she-wolf, and that she has wolves in her stable instead of horses connects her very much to the saga about Hyrrokin, who rode a wolf as well.

In *Völuspá* the giantess-*völva* reveals the future of the worlds in a prophecy, and when the ON people chose to make Hyndla seer *Völuspá* in *skamma* they must have had a good reason for it, even though the short text *Völuspá* in *skamma* was originally a separate poem, and I believe that this Hyndla giantess was originally seen as a seeress – I believe she was actually Aurboða-Gullveig; as this prophecy is called *Völuspá* (in *skamma*) too it must have been believed that the same seeress foretold it. Moreover, instead of making it fully a prophecy Hyndla lists a manifold of giants and *ésir* families and relations with deep insight. This gives you the feeling that Hyndla is as old and knowing as the giantess-*völva* of *Völuspá*. Hyndla could therefore be the same as the mentioned giantess-*völva*. The sagas say that all giants are old and wise; older and wiser than the *ésir*, but only a handful are from the primordial family created by Ýmir, Þrúðgelmir, and Bergelmir, and only these old thurses are all-knowing – all-seeing – and it is from this primordial family that the giantess-*völva* of *Völuspá* presumably originates from. In Hyndla’s insightful listing of families and relations, and seering of Ragna Røk, she manifests fundamentally the relations of Aurboða, Gýmir and Gerðr¹; Þjazi and Skaði; Hrímnir, Heiðr and Hrossþjófr; Loki, Angrboða and Fenrir; also that Byleistr’s brother (Loki) had the most gruesome giantess daughter (Hel); she seers about Loki seeking up Gullveig’s half burnt heart in the ashes and devouring it, and that’s how all the monsters came to the world; also that all sorcerers (*seiðberendr*) come from Surtr (*Svarthøfði*) and all giants from Ýmir. Hyndla ends her speech with foreseeing that the ocean, storms and snow will prepare for the world’s downfall; she sees Óðinn go into battle with Fenrir, and fire burning down the entire world:

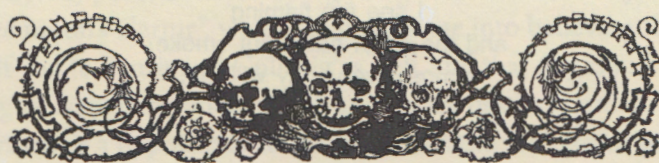
I see fire flaming
and the earth belch out smoke;
almost everybody will die.

¹ The secret knowledge that Aurboða was Gýmir’s wife was only known by Gullveig and Loki in the *Eddas*. This secret knowledge also links Hyndla strongly to Gullveig.

This is undoubtedly in the vein of the *Völuspá*-prophecy, and when you start to think of how many giantesses are mentioned in the *Eddas*, you will quickly understand that they are very few. Indeed, if you consider that the giantess has a greater purpose, there are far, far fewer. It is normal that the same characters with the same traits show up over and over in the sagas but under different names and epithets, so it is evident to me that Hyndla is the same giantess-*völva* as the prophetess in *Völuspá*. Indeed, if the *Völuspá*-prophetess is Gullveig, Hyndla actually fits pretty well as Gullveig “in disguise” – crone of many manifestations, traits and names; mother of the thurs-wolves, and inventor of sorcery.

HELGAKVÍÐA HUNDINGSBANA I

See my chapter on Angrboða.



A Snorra Edda-Study on Gullveig

I would like to go through Snorri Sturluson's works and scrutinize his version of Gullveig's essence in the ON mythology. Even though Snorri was a Christian he still lived in a vital era of the Old Scandinavia and he had access to the original belief and the as yet untarnished mythos. He was brought up with the original tales of the Old giants and gods and had them all told to him by the oral tradition that was still in existence at that time. This makes Snorri a very important source for my ON studies. His texts are an important part of the ON literature and mythology, and by reading between the lines and comparing it to other ON mythological texts you can, albeit with a fair amount of difficulty, understand what is in line with the true ON tradition and what are Christian influences. Christianity as a foreign way of thinking stands out from the ON one and that is an advantage in this context.

I will, in this chapter, focus on Snorri's version of the *Edda* which is known as *Snorra Edda* (Snorri's *Edda*) or the *Prose Edda*; *Younger Edda*. It was written by Snorri around the year 1220 AD. As I said in the previous chapter, what makes this *Edda* different from the elder one is Snorri's own version of the *Edda* which he calls *Gylfaginning*, where he makes up his own story about a sort of an interview with three wise-men or gods (obviously Óðinn himself and his two brothers) who answer the interviewer's questions. Snorri quotes the *Sæmundar Edda* in addition to his own made up story. Another mythologically important text that he added is the *Skáldskaparmál*.

GYLFAGINNING

Gullveig is introduced in chapter 12 as being the mother of the thursian wolf-race:

A giantess dwells to the east of Miðgarðr, in the forest called Járnvíðr: in that wood dwell the troll-women, who are known as Járnvíðjur (Ironwood-women). The old giantess bears many giants for sons, and all in the shape of wolves; and from this source are these wolves sprung (i.e. Fenrir, Hati (whom I believe is the same as Garmr), and Sköll).

Snorri quotes *Völuspá* 40-41, stanzas which depict Gullveig as the Old One who lives in the infamous woods called the Ironwood, and that she is there mothering the horrible offspring of Fenrir from where all monsters derive.

Not until chapter 34 is she brought up again and this time by name, Angrboða. She is described as dwelling in Jötunheimr and to have had three children with Loki: Fenrisúlfr, Jörmungandr (here also called Miðgarðsormr), and Hel. However, when the gods learned that they were brought up in Jötunheimr and that the prophecy called *Völuspá* had told the gods that these kindred would bring great misfortune upon them, and they realized what a horrible monster-breed this was, considering their evil mother and their cunning father (both being thurs-giants), Óðinn ordered the *ásir* to bring the kindred to him. When they did so he cast the serpent into the sea at once, and the serpent grew so big that it encompassed all of the land and bit

its own tail. Hel was cast into Niflheimr, and Óðinn gave her the rulership over the nine worlds¹. And Fenrir they bound with magical fetters made by dwarves from Svartálfaheimr, not by the *ásir*. Although it was not until the third fetter, which was called

Gleipnir (the two first fetters which broke were called Lædingr

and Drómi), that the *ásir* were able to restrain him, although not without a fight. Fenrir refused to try on another fetter as he knew that the *ásir* were trying to bind him, so he cunningly said that if he was going to try on the third fetter, one of the gods needed to lay his arm between his jaws. None of the gods were brave enough to do this until Týr stepped forward and laid his arm in Fenrir's mouth. As Gleipnir was too strong for Fenrir, he bit Týr's hand off. The gods then laughed and took the chain which was attached to the fetter, called Gelgja, and imprisoned Fenrir on the island called Lyngvi in the midst of the abyss called Ámsvartnir. Lastly, they put a sword between his jaws so he could not snap and bite, and from there on Fenrir bayed horribly and stayed there till Ragna Røk.

In chapter 37 Gullveig is brought up again as the giantess Aurboða, Gýmir's wife and mother to Gerðr. Here Snorri narrates a short version of the *Skírnismál* found in *Sæmundar Edda*.

Chapter 49 is about Baldr's death; here Snorri allegorizes Gullveig as Hyrrokin (spelt "Hyrrokkin" by Snorri), as she comes riding on a giant wolf with snakes for bridle, «*en er hon kom (Hyrrokin) ok reið vargi ok hafði höggorm at taumum, þá hljóp hon af hestinum*». The wolf is so big Snorri calls it a horse, *hestr*. This short Gullveig-episode is about the time when Hyrrokin helps the *ásir* to put Baldr's funeral ship into the water as the giantess of the eastern storms.

¹Note that it is said nine worlds, not the ninth world: «*níu heimum*».

SKÁLDSKAPARMÁL

The only time Gullveig is mentioned in *Skáldskaparmál* is amongst the *Þórskenningar* where she is named as Hyrrokkin, as one of the giantesses that Þórr had killed.

NAFNABULUR

Under the label *Tröllkonur*, for giantesses, Hyrrokkin is named. No other Gullveig name or epithet known by me is in this list.



Undirheimar

A MYTHOLOGICAL SURVEY AND A SUMMARY OF THE UNDERWORLD

Before I get into the study of Hel and her mother, and their underworldly aspects and connections, I would like to clear up what the underworld in the ON mythology looks like and what it holds, as a result of my own heavy research on the subject. This is a very complex task because the poor sources of the ON mythology don't leave us much information about the cosmology and the underworldly geography; most of the knowledge has been lost. This has a negative effect, which results in many bad interpretations. There are several underworld-hypotheses and mere personal opinions made out of neglect and indolence out there which I believe to be erroneous. So I will here bring up the sources that we actually have and analyze them from my point of view.

As we are today sitting in the shadows of our forefathers' knowledge, I feel it's important to bear in mind that the Christian distortions in the process of putting the Old Norse oral sagas and mythology into writing and all the attempts in translating have affected the view of the underworld greatly. As we now know, scripts were a Christian tradition and Christianity brought the importance of writing and documentation to Scandinavia in the middle ages. The Old Norse people didn't really write down mythology and sagas until the early middle ages, but before that the people carved memories of the their dead and beloved ones, and even fractions of mythological events, but not long mythological descriptions like in the *Eddas*. For example, the *Sæmundar Edda* was collected as several individual hand-writings and then later transcribed into the book *Codex Regius* approximately two hundred years after Scandinavia had been christianized. This worries me a lot, so I have decided to try to see through the assumedly christianized versions of our Old religion and mythology, and get the true understanding and view of our ancestors. However, this is almost impossible without any other references, and there are none. So instead of trying to fantasize my own "thought-up" version of the underworld – which is not my intention (I am only after the *truth*) – I keep the *Edda*-references and out of them try to see what dwells behind the lines.

Initially, there were two Jötunheimr, Jötunheimar in plural¹, and according to Rydberg the primary one in the sagas was the one in the middle world, Miðgarðr; and this "upper" Jötunheimr was said to be located in the furthest north and east of Scandinavia, beyond the icy Arctic Ocean which delimits Scandinavia from the North Pole. The current which runs there was probably looked upon as waters from Élivágar; one of the eleven rivers, as it is told in *Grímnismál* 26:

The deer is named Eikpyrnir,
which in Herjafóðr's halls stood and gnawed on Læraþr's
branches;
from his horns Hvergelmir's water poured,
it is from where all waters spring.

It might even have been the river Gjöll². This means that the northern regions of Jötunheimr were the North Pole and lands around it (which might have been including some northern islands of Norway), and the eastern parts might have been the most northern part of Russia. It is said by Rydberg that in Jötunheimr in Miðgarðr there is a cave that leads down to Mímir's underworldly land. The entrance down to the underworld was in all probability located in Jötunheimr in Miðgarðr. Hence the classic direction in *Gylfaginning*: «*en niðr og norðr liggr Helvegr*», "downwards and to the north lays Helvegr", that is to say; *niðr*, east, and *norðr*, north, lays the path to Hel (see my chart of the ON cosmology called Heldrasill in the appendix.)

Now, the underworld embodies a great deal of powers and cosmic history, and it is hard for me to accept the reason as to *why* it has been pretty much put aside while the upper worlds and their inhabitants have been in focus. If one reads the sagas the main-focus lays on Miðgarðr the home of humans and gods, and Ásgarðr the home of the *ásir*. Vanaheimr and the underworld have been put aside. This is a mystery to me as the underworld holds the very foundation of it all; it holds the sources of the *ásir*'s strength and knowledge – even the *ásir*'s treasures and weapons are said to have been made by dwarves (ON *dvergr*), and dwarves were seen in the earlier times as a giant-race living in the underworld; e.g. *Svartálfaheimr*. Clive Tolley says "*Dvergjar* were underworld, deathly beings, most nearly akin to giants (though they are distinguished from them)."³ Dwarves were

¹ For example, the saga *Þrymskviða* in *Sæmundar Edda* continuously mentions "Jötunheimar" as in manifold homes of the giants; here's just a few examples from its contents: (5) «*Fló þá Loki, fjaðrhamr dundí, unz fyr útan kom ása garða ok fyr innan kom jötna heima*», "and he came within the homes/worlds of the giants", (7) «*Hví ertu einn kominn í Jötunheima?*», "Have you come alone to the homes/worlds of the giants?", (12) «*vit skulum aka tvau í Jötunheima*», "the two of us shall go to the homes/worlds of the giants", and (13) «*... ef ek ek með þér í Jötunheima*», "...if I go with you to the homes/worlds of the giants." *Völuspá* (8) also mentions "Jötunheimar" as in manifold giant homes; «*uns þrjár kvámu þursa meyjar á máttkar mjök ór Jötunheimum*», "from the homes/worlds of the giants."

² *Gylfaginning*.

³ Tolley, 2009, *Shamanism in Norse Myth and Magic*.

smaller than regular giants but tall as full-grown trees compare to humans. This is where it got misunderstood in later times and dwarves became some kind of midget. The importance of the underworld is shown by the ON people allegorizing the world tree; the roots where the tree gets its nourishments are placed in the underworld, and the “foundation” where the tree is sprung from and rests upon is the black soil of the underworld. The roots stretch far apart so the tree can grow much in height and width. Snorri tells us that one of the roots is leading up to Ásgarðr, the world of the *ásir* which lies in the crown of the Yggdrasill. How Snorri gets this to work is a big mystery to me.

The above brings me to a very key point: according to the ON people everything sprung from Ginnungagap in Chaos; Ginnungagap held the worlds Niflheimr and Múspellzheimr, and when they grew so big that they collided, both elements of these two worlds created water which streamed into the cosmos as an invading current from which everything in the cosmos was created – and it is those two principal worlds, Niflheimr and Múspellzheimr, which the underworld is built upon; which is to say Niflheimr and Múspellzheimr lie in Chaos.

The underworld is an entity consisting of two worlds called Jötunheimr and Helheimr. The world of the dead, Helheimr, stretches deep down into the underworld, all the way down to the lowest pits of the abyss where Chaos once opened up (*Gap Ginnunga*). One could actually die in the underworld, it was called “to die out of Helheimr”. Snorri says that only the worst spirits reached the depths of Niflheimr. This view upon Niflheimr must have been an outcome of a Christian influence. Although, at the same time this testifies of how to transcend unto Chaos. Much like the Chaos-Gnostic belief, this shows that rebels, outlaws and Satanists – the Old Scandinavian umbrella term for this is *vargr* – would be free to walk on the north-east path of the dead, Helveg, down throughout the underworld into the deepest pit and then to transcend unto Chaos into the world of the rime-thurses, and finally arrive at the wintry lands of Niflheimr. This way of dying was looked upon as a punishment, by Snorri’s account, but for a follower of Thursatru and Gnostic Satanism this is a goal.

So the worlds which everything sprung from are also the worlds everything comes back to, “the womb and the tomb.” This might be the reason why thurses have been looked upon as terrors and antagonists, because they are already “dead” and have really nothing to fear, they are already very old (old age was what the *ásir* dreaded the most); the “old age” was an allegory for their fear of emerging into the worlds of the giants: to “die”, to descend and transcend, and be among the rime-

thurses. The fearlessness of the thurses though, was actually adopted by the Viking warriors, and the main key to their success in battle was their lack of fear of death. Death was an honor for them: to die in battle was a free ticket to the mightiest of honors in their opinion – to come to Valhøll as a warrior for Óðinn himself. Vikings did not raid for their country or king; they upheld their gods and their spiritual destiny over anything.

*

This is told in *Grímnismál* 31:

Three roots in three ways
out from the ash Yggdrasill.
Hel lives under one,
under the second one the rime-thurses,
and under the third the humans.

At first this stanza left me with much frowning and scratching in my beard. It says that the three roots lead to 1) Hel who lives by Urðarheimr/Urðarbrunnr, 2) Niflheimr and the rime-thurses, and 3) mankind. After many weeks behind books, and many weeks in front of my altars, I have come to an understanding which differs from all others I've come across. The underworld is not split into three, but in two; Jötunheimr and Helheimr. They cannot dwell in each other because they are mentioned several times to be each a world (*heimr*). Why *Grímnismál* says that the third root leads to humankind is most likely a sentence referred to what *Vafþrúðnismál* 45 divulges; that humans get stashed away in Mímir's abode. This stanza hints to when the worlds will burn by Surtr's wrath and the humans in Mímir's abode, Mímisheimr, will survive and procreate. So what *Grímnismál* really says is that the third root leads to Mímisbrunnr in Jötunheimr. And why *Grímnismál* says that Hel lives under one root is just a way of saying that the first root leads to Helheimr, and, in my opinion, it was imagined that Urðarbrunnr dwelt in Helheimr. Finally, the root which leads to the rime-thurses is meant to be Hvergelmir in Niflheimr, and I believe that both Niflheimr and Múspellzheimr lay in Chaos; beyond the underworld. See my chart Heldrasill in the appendix.

*

Gylfaginning says:

Three roots of the tree uphold it and are reaching far apart. One is among the *Æsir*, another among the rime-thurses, in that place where the beginning of time was called Ginnungagap; the third stands over Niflheimr, and under that root is Hvergelmir, and Niðhöggr gnaws the root from below. And under that root which belongs to the rime-thurses is Mímis Brunnr, wherein wisdom and understanding are stored. And he is called Mímir who keeps that well. He is full of wisdom...

I interpret Snorri's words as his will to make the ON religion and mythology into the Christian one: Heaven – Earth – Hell. It is known that Snorri had this intention, so his details about the underworld are more of a Christian hellish nature, which does not correspond with the primitive ON mythology.

¹ The word "Hell" derives from the Old Gothic word *halja* which meant underworld. And it was borrowed by the Scandinavian languages: the Old Norse and Icelandic word *hel* – in Swedish the word *helvete* comes from the Old Norse term *Helvíti*, same goes for the Danish word *helvede* (OSw. *hælvite*, Isl. *helvíti*, "the kingdom of the dead" or "Hel's punishment or inferno".)

Niflheimr is the dark and misty place which was later inspired by the Christian's inferno called Hell¹. For Snorri, this underworldly dark place has all kind of horrors, and it has something the Old Norse people called "pits of suffering"; rivers with sharp blades in them. Blood-soaked Garmr lives there and feeds on human flesh, and in the deepest tracts of Niflheimr, where Hvergelmir's eternal depths begin, Niðhöggr and his black dragon-spawn dwell.

Rydberg explains that in the beginning of time it was here where Niflheimr was located in Chaos. At the same time he allegorizes Niðafjöll as the dark horrible mountains in the center of the underworld that separate Helheimr from Niflheimr,

but he also claims that Niðafjöll belongs to Niflheimr, which means that, according to Rydberg, Niðafjöll – Mímir – Mímisbrunnr is not a neutral region in the underworld, but belonging to the dark and cold world of Niflheimr and its rime-thurses. How is it possible that Mímir's wonderful and peaceful regions belong to Niflheimr's world? He obviously bases his understanding on both the *Sæmundar Edda* and the *Snorra Edda*, which are totally different and just makes his theories confusing and self-contradictory. Snorri evidently changed the whole cosmology by freely moving Urðr and Urðarbrunnr's realm to heaven, and let Helheimr become the whole of the underworld, and made it equal to Christianity's Hell. *Gylfaginning's* author did all this without even considering that this would have severe consequences in the mythology. The underworld before this dramatic change was partly a place of peace and tranquility, but after Snorri's ruthlessness it became just a place of death and anguish.

In my studies I've noticed that the OI word *undirheimar*, underworlds, is not used once in the *Sæmundar Edda* or *Snorra Edda*. The underworld and its homes are written about extensively but not once is the OI word for the underworld used. This seemed strange to me in the beginning, but after going through the sagas over and over I realized that the poetic language used in the sagas embellishes the use of the concept *undirheimar*, and the underworld that concerned the human beings was the world of the dead, a specific location in the underworld called *Helheimr* (often shortened just to *Hel*), therefore more dramatic phrases were used for (the descending into) the underworld: *fyr nágrindr neðan*¹ (*Skírnismál* 35), *fara til Heljar og þaðan í Niflhel* (*Gylfaginning* 3), *fyr jørð neðan ...*² *at solum Heljar* (*Völuspá* 43), *á helvegum*³ (*Völuspá* 47), *fara til heljar heðan* (*Fáfnismál* 10), *niðri í jørðu* (*Gylfaginning*), and *í jørð niðr*⁴ (*Gylfaginning*).

¹ Below the gate of the dead/corpses.

² Under the world.

³ On Hel's paths.

⁴ In under the earth, meaning into the underworld.

ON *Jormungrund*, the vast earth, is another name for the underworld, the Other World, found in *Grímnismál* 20. The underworld was seen to be an immeasurable void: a reversed and bigger version of the universe, but with a different function. The underworld was the first void which sprang from *Niflheimr* and *Múspellzheimr*, and the demiurgic god Óðinn created the universe with his brothers as he wanted his own abode outside the Giants' worlds.

The following hypothesis comes from a vision I received in a dream. There is just really one reason for a human being to go to the underworld, and that is when you die, your spirit goes there with certain chosen objects which are burned with you at the funeral in your grave; the objects' essences become connected with you during the funeral rite. When you descend into the underworld you still have your body etc.; this can be explained by saying that all cosmic life is an "illusion": your spirit has been disconnected with your ego and thereby blinded from your true *self*, and in its turn became tricked into actually believing having a body; which in reality it does not (hence the illusion). In the underworld the remnants of your former existence stay with you like an echo from the past, and once reborn in the underworld you believe that you have a physical body again. It is only when you transcend unto *Niflheimr*, i.e. beyond the underworld and unto Chaos, that the illusion ends and your spirit becomes free again and you are able to open your blinded true eyes. As I said earlier, in the underworld there is only one place for the spirit of a dead human to go and it is to the world of the dead; *Hel*'s secondary home, *Helheimr*. All other

worlds and space in the underworld belong to divinities and such, e.g. *pursar* and *jotnar*. Much like our reality and universe, the humans only live in a small part of the universe, the earth; the rest belongs to other powers and life-forms.

So this is why the poets did not use the OI word *undirheimar* for the underworld(s) in the ON poetry but rather different forms of the phrase “Hel’s dominion in the underworld.” The most common phrase used for this in the ON sagas was “go to Hel”, but in a wide variety (see examples above), meaning “for a human spirit to descend into one definite location in the underworld.” It was common knowledge in ancient Scandinavia that we humans only went to one specific place in the underworld: Helheimr.

As a devotee of Hel and the rime-powers of Niflheimr, I personally see the transcendence unto Niflheimr as an honor and goal, not a punishment. I also see the rather young concept of *Helvíti* as a gift, rather than the twisted theory that it would have anything to do with a penalty. I believe that *Helvíti* could be something like the Hellenic tradition to pay coins for being transported to Hades, as Styx and Cerberus could easily be compared to Gjöll, Helvegr and Garmr.

MY UNDERSTANDING AND CONCLUSION

(Please look at my chart of the ON cosmology called Heldrasill in the appendix while reading this text).

Somewhere in the midst of Chaos, the endless black ocean of tranquility, lies a small intruding creation called the cosmos, OI *Allheimr*. It is a sphere with a collec-

tion of worlds within it. In the ON mythology and belief the cosmos was allegorized as a tree, a world-tree¹ – with the crown being the higher realm, the trunk being the middle realm, and the roots the lower realm. This is a simple map many other traditions use in this form or another. In the ON tradition the bottom of the underworld,

¹ There has been many disputes weather it is an Ash-tree or Yew-tree; in my book it is a Yew-tree.

undirheimar, is in the east, and the highest peak of the upper world where the high gods have their domain, Ásgarðr, is in the west. Below on the trunk of the world-tree lay the middle earth, Miðgarðr, the world of the humans. To the north/east of Miðgarðr lies the “upper” world of the giants, *øfri Jotunheim*, “upper giant-home.” It was probably thought of as being on the border of the underworld, as there is supposed to be a portal from the upper world to the underworld, and it most likely

lies in the *øfri Jötunheim*. The underworld starts at the world-tree's roots (*undirheimar* is written in plural because it is not one world but two); to the north, right below the *øfri* (upper) *Jötunheim*, lies the underworldly version of the giant-world, the *niðri* (lower) *Jötunheim*. In the world of the giants, *Jötunheimr*, lies the well of wisdom which is known as the well of Mimir, *Mímisbrunnr*. The northern root of the world-tree leads to *Jötunheimr* and *Mímisbrunnr*. At the north/east of *Jötunheimr* lies the infamous Ironwood, *Járnviðr*, the dark and cold dwelling of *Gul-lveig*. The darkness and coldness of the Ironwood comes from *Niflheimr*'s chaotic blackness and rime-ocean storms, as *Niflheimr* lies right under *Jötunheimr* and *Járnviðr* in the north-east beyond the realm of *undirheimar* in Chaos. However, the shores of *Hvergelmir* called the icy waves, *Élivágar*, lies on the border between Chaos and *undirheimar*, and its poisonous icy waters intrude the underworld as eleven rivers. The middle root of the world-tree reaches all the way down to the well of wisdom which is known as *Hvergelmir* in *Niflheimr*. And the third root which leads to the South ends up in *Helheimr*, which is the second world in the underworld; the world of the dead. The root leads to its well of wisdom known as *Urðr*'s well, *Urðarbrunnr*. Under *Helheimr* to the South-East lies the world of flames, *Múspellzheimr* – beyond the realm of *undirheimar* in Chaos. Lastly, between *Niflheimr* and *Múspellzheimr* remains the primordial black portal, the once gaping jaws of Chaos; *Ginnungagap*.

There are three worlds that I have not included; the only reason why I didn't is that they have no part in this work. In the crown of the world tree *Vanaheimr* and *Álfheimr* are supposed to lie, and *Svartálfaheimr* is supposed to lie in the underworld.

SUMMARY

I. Chaos is all, and within Chaos the cosmos lies like an egg.

II. The cosmos holds the world tree and its worlds.

III. The upper worlds are: a) Ásgarðr, b) Miðgarðr, and c) “upper” Jötunheimr.

IV. The underworld includes: a) Jötunheimr, and b) Helheimr.

V. Járnviðr (ironwood) is a region in the east/north of Jötunheimr where Gullveig (and Fenrir) has her abode under the name Angrboða.

VI. The three roots lead to the three wells of wisdom: 1) Mímisbrunnr, 2) Urðarbrunnr, and 3) Hvergelmir.

VII. Élivágar is Hvergelmir’s sea-shore where eleven rivers of Hvergelmir’s icy water run out.

VIII. The worlds in Chaos are Niflheimr and Múspellsheimr. They both lie on each side of Ginnungagap.





Hel – In Svarta

The name Hel, gen. Heljar, derives from the Gothic word *halja*, Old High German *hella*. *Halja* is commonly translated to “underworld”, and according to Rydberg it derives from the Latin word *occulere*; to conceal, preserve, which in its turn is cognate with *occultum*, a hidden place. Indirectly it suggests a place in darkness, which could be allegorized as a grave, cave, and of course something *undir heimar*, “under the worlds”, or a divinity from such a place. Hel as a term for the underworld was not a place of suffering in the early ON religion; it was another dimension where everybody descended into after death. The ON religion was a polytheistic religion and the underworld as the upper world had many ruling divinities, and therefore also many different purposes. Your death and descent into the underworld did not equal suffering and *Helvíti*; it gave you another sublime opportunity of existence. Hel could not simply be compared to Gehenna and Tartarus, or Hades and Sheol; that is why the earliest Christian *Bible* in a Germanic language used the Gothic word *halja* for Hell instead of the ON Hel, as the ON concept Hel did not represent what the Christian’s Inferno embraced. But when Snorri’s *Gylfaginning*-saga was spread through Scandinavia, the ON underworld-belief was quickly deviated and slowly turned into a monotheistic belief. Christianity was quick in defiling all good in the ON belief, but kept fragments of it to make an example of how bad that old heathen religion was. That’s why they kept the ON term *helvíti* and turned it into a word for their burning underworld inferno Hell: Swedish and Norwegian *Helvete* and Danish

Helvede. The new traditions in Scandinavia saved a few more terms connected to Hel to point out a negative tone around Hel, for example the ON saying *í Hel*, roughly translated into "to death" (with the notion death as the world of the dead), which is still kept in modern Swedish; *ihjäl*, to beat or starve someone to death etc.; OI *drepa í Hel*, "to kill".

Hel, the black giantess – I call her *bláráma* and *svartheiðr* – is one of the most complex and challenging characters in the ON mythology. Her role in the sagas and the belief is to rule the world(s) of the dead – Helheimr, and also Niflhel-Niflheimr. There is not much said about Hel's characteristics in *Sæmundar Edda*; it is Snorri's inspiration of the Christian mythology that first describes Hel's appearance as the giantess of the dead. *Gylfaginning* describes that Hel was cast down into Niflheimr by Óðinn and made her the ruler of nine worlds. *Gylfaginning* 34:

Hel kastaði hann í Niflheim og gaf henni vald yfir níu heimum, að hún skipti öllum vistum með þeim er til hennar voru sendir, það eru sótt dauðir menn og ellidauðir. Hún á þar mikla bólstaði og eru garðar hennar forkunnar háir og grindur stórar. Éljúðnir heitir salur hennar, Hungur diskur hennar, Sultur knífur hennar, Ganglati þrællinn, Ganglöt ambátt, Fallandaforað þreskuldur hennar er inn gengur, Kör sæng, Blíkjandaböl ársali hennar. Hún er blá hálf en hálf með hörundar lit. Því er hún auðkennd og heldur gnúpleit og grimleg.

* * *

Hel he cast into Niflheimr, and gave to her power over nine worlds, to apportion all abodes among those that were sent to her. That is, men dead of sickness or of old age. She has great might there; her walls are exceedingly high and her gates great. Her hall is called Éljúðnir; her dish, Hungur; Sultur is her knife; Ganglati her thrall; Ganglöt her maidservant; Fallandaforað her threshold, by which one enters; Kör her bed; Blíkjandaböl her bed-hangings. She is half blue-black and half flesh-color, by which she is easily recognized, and stooping and grim.

Evidently she was "doomed" to live in Niflheimr, which in itself holds Niflhel, due to her powerful character and adverse temper towards the *ásir*; a rime-thursian giantess – daughter of Gullveig and Loki. As for Hel as a realm, Helheimr, it could be understood in several modern sources that Hel equals the whole underworld, so what is the difference between Hel, Helheimr, and Niflhel? After I've been researching this in the ON literature I found that Hel later became synonymous with the underworld as an outcome from negligence to specific aspects. Much like the ON noun *helvíti*, "Hel's punishment" or "the fine of Hel", was a concept that got twisted around by the same kind of negligence, and *helvíti* became the modern word for the Christian Hell, Jewish Gehenna, and Hellenic Tartaros. This is not a rare

phenomenon, it actually happens all the time, even in modern times. What I want to say with this is that the name Hel, for the realm of the dead, was from the beginning synonymous with Helheimr and Niflhel as a location of the dead in Niflheimr alone; in its primitive form, as *Vafþrúðnismál* 43 informs:

...I went all the way down to Niflhel, where the dead who have died out of Hel dwell.

The underworld all together was from the beginning only seen as and called *undirheimar*, the under worlds (note plural). However, with time the whole lower region which contained several worlds became the region of the dead; hence the modern and common understanding of the name Hel. So in my opinion, Hel as a name of a realm is just an epithet for a collection of certain worlds, such as the lower ones, which hold the dead. From this hypothesis I chose to use Hel only in its primitive and correct form for the giantess and daughter of Gullveig, Helheimr for the world of the dead located in the underworld (*undirheimar*) not being its equal, and Niflhel for the realm of the dead in Niflheimr which lies in Chaos – three different entities but strongly interlinked. The fact that Helheimr and Niflhel were two separate heimar (worlds) is told in *Baldur's Draumar* 2 and *Vafþrúðnismál* 43; this shows however what a big difference it existed between them. To “die out of Helheimr” and descend unto Niflhel testifies of the similarity to when you “die out of Miðgarðr” and descend unto the underworld. How exactly this functioned the sagas do not say, but it strengthens my theory that Niflhel/Niflheimr lays in Chaos – beyond the underworld and Helheimr.

Now, exactly how Niflheimr and Niflhel were separated we don't know, so after a thorough investigation on this subject I take them for being one and the same; I believe the name Niflhel just emphasizes the deathly aspect of this realm, because of the epithet for Hel as the ruler in Niflheimr. To me, Nifl-Hel means Hel of Niflheimr, which has with time become an epithet for Niflheimr too, the home of the dead in the world of mists and darkness. Compare this to the OE epithets *helvítismyrkr*, “the darkness of Hel's fine”, and *Hel-blár* (*blár sem Hel*)¹, “black as Hel”. The last one is interesting because it denotes the ON people's view upon Hel the giantess; this was before the stagnant and dualistic thinking came to Scandinavia with the Christendom, where Hel became allegorized as half black and half white to stress the new religion's dualistic view upon death (a good one or a bad one), compared to the primitive pluralistic ON perspective where you had at least four locations for the dead. Some people claim that it represents the moon

¹ Cleasby-Vigfusson, 1874, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*.

phases. I myself reject this whole allegorization of Hel's appearance being half black and half white, I think it degrades her totality as a mighty thursian rime-giantess. Hel was initially looked upon in Old Scandinavia as a black and livid hue¹ repre-

¹ Cleasby-Vigfusson, 1874, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*.

senting the pure blackness and cold of Niflheimr and death. This is very interesting as she is the ruler of Niflheimr and is allegorized as black, and the ruler of Múspellzheimr, Surtr, is called the black-headed one, *Svarthöfði*. In addition to this I want to

mention that I suspect that Helheimr and Niflhel were looked upon, in medieval Scandinavia, as being the entire underworld split in two; the bright one and the dark one – hence Hel's late appearance as half white and half black, representing just this (*nifl* is generally translated into mist or darkness). Helheimr is located above Múspellzheimr and its heat, and Jötunheimr, which by this hypothesis must be exchanged with the medieval view upon Niflhel, is located above Niflheimr with its cold and darkness; which could have been allegorized as Helheimr was green and summery because of Múspellzheimr's warmth, and Niflhel dark and cold by Niflheimr's gloomy condition (see chart in appendix). This is probably how Snorri saw it. There is no proof of this though; this is just my own interpretation. But with the medieval Scandinavians' turning to the monotheistic religion, dualism infected their whole world-view, and this is exactly how the primitive ON religion withered into oblivion.

Niflheimr is proven to lie in Chaos, which means that according to *Gylfaginning* 34 Hel descended into the underworld and transcended onto Chaos (beyond the underworld). This is again a hypothesis which I do not agree with; I believe that Hel never ended up in the care of the *ésir* in the first place, but stayed in Niflheimr the whole time. She was born there from Gullveig's womb of darkness and there grew into the icy thursian power allegorized as Death. I strongly believe that Hel as the ruler of the dead has always been seen as the "black hue" in the deepest gape of the underworld; the part which belongs to Chaos. Gullveig is the mightiest and highest of all the thursian giantesses, and her daughter Hel is the second most powerful thursian giantess, so according to this genealogy sprung from Chaos and Icy Darkness (*hrímmyrkr*), Gullveig is called the Old One and Hel is thereby the Younger One – which in its turn makes Hel a Chaos-giantess. By her mighty power and her place next to Gullveig she can rule the whole underworld and nine worlds from her black throne in Chaos. However, as a result of *Gylfaginning*, Hel is in general seen as a manifestation and personification of the entire underworld, understood as a realm of the dead by many of the modern mythologists; a hypothesis which cannot be accurate as Hel is not the sole ruler in the underworld. She is not even the sole ruler of the dead; the giantess Rán for example swallows the dead that

have drowned, and I don't think it is as simple as that. First off, Hel is a giantess, a queen of the dead with the particular purpose of guiding the dead and their destiny. She swallows them and makes sure that they do not return to the upper world by letting her guardian Garmr, the blood-soaked one, watch over them all. Garmr is a thursian dog, *Heljarsinni*, who guards the dead at *Helgrindr* (some compare him to Fenrir, I believe he is analogous to Hati). Hel is the daughter of the Chaos-thurses Gullveig and Loki, which makes Death their invention and apparatus. Hel has the epithet *Loka mæR*, Loki's daughter; which was also used as a synonym for death; "to play with" or "to be taken by *Loka mæR*" for example meant to be dead.

Hel's siblings were also archetypes of death. Jörmungandr is the thursian serpent which is commonly known as a symbol of death. He encircles the upper or middle world and holds it in his grip; he is the threshold facing the underworld. He is venomous and gigantic, dwelling in the depths of the sea in wait for the day of wrath, Ragna Rök. Fenrir is the violent death unleashed and untamed. He is a symbol of the wolfish jaws of nature that are always hungry and that are always on the prowl. Fenrir dwells in the underworld together with his mother Gullveig and procreates unlimitedly; all wolves and werewolves come from him and his mother. The wolves are attributed with a hellish throat¹ due to their greed, and Bugge wrote that the wolfish Devil was called *lupus vorax*²; as in «*en Fenrisúlfr fer með gapandi munn og er hinn efri kjafr við himni en hinn neðri við jörðu*»³ (*Gylfaginning* 51) and «*skal alda hverr fara til heljar heðan*»⁴ (*Fáfnismál* 10). In symbology the wolf represents Death and her hunger and greed, swallowing of the dead. The ON poetry loved to express this in embellished songs; the *Eddas* say for example «*þar er þik Hel hafir, haldi Hel því er hefir, and hefir nu Hel*», all saying that Hel shall have you. This is in analogy with the wolfish entity and descent, and thereby self-explains the nexus between Death and the Wolf, i.e. Hel and Fenrir.

¹ Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*.

² Bugge, 1899, *The Home of the Eddic Poems with Especial Reference to the Helgi-Lays*.

³ "Fenrir shall rise with gaping mouth, and his upper jaw shall reach the heaven and the lower the earth."

⁴ "Though all people shall fare hence to Hel."

This archetypal trinity of death, Hel, Jörmungandr, and Fenrir, is the spawn of the most powerful Chaos-giants in the Old Norse: Gullveig and Loki. And it is Gullveig and Loki's attributes that have created these monster-children. This is shown especially in Gullveig, Fenrir and Hel, and in Loki and his first-born Jörmungandr.

It is partly confusing, but at the same time very fascinating and logical. Hel is confirmed to be the daughter of Gullveig and Loki, also a Chaos-giantess and ruler of Helheimr and Niflhel/Niflheimr. She is the sovereign of the world of death, she

is the queen of the darkest underworld and the malady-spirits in the form of a giantess called Leikn¹. There is not much proof of Leikn's existence, but some very interesting details are found in *Skáldskaparmál* 11, which is a list of giants and giantesses killed by Þórr; it says «*leggi brauzt þú Leiknar*», "you broke Leikn's legs". Could this be connected to when the *ásir*,

presumably Þórr, threw Hel into Niflheimr (according to Snorri) and broke half of her body?² This might be a direct proof for their identification as the same giantess. The saga *Ynglinga* tal 7 says: «*Yngva þjóðar Loka mæf leikinn hefr*», "Yngvi whom Loki's child was playing with". And in *Völuspá* 22 Leikn is also mentioned as *hug Leikin*, not so surprisingly together with the explanation of Heiðr's black magic or necromancy:

¹ Rydberg claims that the giantess Hel is wrongfully called Hel, that her true name is Leikn/Leikin due to her necromantic and pestilent qualities.

² *Gylfaginning* 34.

³ Cleasby-Vigfusson, 1874, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*.

Heiði hana hétu,
hvars til húsa kom,
vølu vespá,
vitti hon ganda,
seið hon hvars hon kunni,
seið hon hugleikin,
æ var hon angan illrar brúðar.

* * *


Heiðr her name was,
to houses she came,
the seeress with adequate prophecies.
She wielded witchcraft,
she conjured disease,
she invoked Leikin,
always was she loved
by wicked women.

Hug- comes from the ON word *hugr*, mind, with the notion of thought; *hugr* can even by itself mean heart³. The word in its overall sense carries the meaning of inspirited (with a soul). I like to compare this to the line where Loki is said to devour Gullveig's heart, which he found among her ashes; *Völuspá in skamma* 12:

Loki át hjarta
lindi brenndu,
fann hann halfsviðinn
hugstein konu;
varð Loftr kviðugr
af konu illri;
þaðan er á foldu
flagð hvert komit.

* * *

Loki ate a heart
 burnt upon the embers,
 he found the half-singed
 heart of a woman.
 Loptr was expectant with child
 of that wicked woman;
 and from this
 all monsters derived.

Hugsteinn, mind-rock, is an ON poetic metaphor for heart; it was thought that your soul lived within your heart, here allegorized as an “inspired rock.” So when Loki ate Gullveig’s heart he got inspired by her spirit, which in the sagas leads to pregnancy. In these two examples above I want to put emphasis on *hug-* and its meaning “inspired” which is the foundation of my own hypothesis that *hugleikin* in this case refers to necromancy – sorcery dealing with Hel-powers; the wielding of “ensouled death” which would be the essence of Leikn or Hel. The line *seið hon hugleikin* would then mean, as I understand it, that Heiðr is practicing necromancy, the art of her daughter; Leikin’s black magic. True necromancy could more properly in Old Norse be called; Heleikinn – .

After I discovered the true meaning of these lines, I found the same theory in Rydberg’s work from 1886, and he helped me to find even more details on this subject (you can compare this part to his work.) He points out the two same but different lines in *Codex Regius’ Völuspá*, which says:

seið hon kvni
 seiþ hon leikin

The first interesting detail is that *kvni* here is spelt with a “v” and not a “u”, and according to Bugge, in *Codex Regius* “v” is used for both “u” and “y”. This means that *kvni* could be the ON neuter noun *kyn* in dative; *kyni*, *kyn* which Rydberg says means monstrous or supernatural. He compares this noun *kyn* to the OI words *kyn-jamein* and *kynjasótt* which are supposed to mean “a disease received through sorcery.” Just like my own hypothesis, in both places of the two quoted lines *seið* is the past tense of the verb *síða*, the process of performing magic/*seiðr*, and not the noun *seiðr* itself: see further *An Icelandic-English Dictionary* by Cleasby and Vigfusson under *Síða*, v. > “...of which occur only the infin. pret. seið, Vsp. 25.” You can trace the ON *kyn* in the Icelandic words *kyngi*, magical knowledge, and *fjølkyngi*, black magic and witchcraft. It most likely derives from the ON *stem kunna*, to know, as in

the English word *can* (*know*) which derives from the same root as ON *kunna*, which is the Latin *gnosco*, get to know, *gnosis* (Greek), knowledge, *cognosco*, to learn, know. I compare this to the rune *Kyn* (<); which is, in my understanding, the true name and meaning of this rune. The OI noun *kyngi* is a remnant of what the *Kyn* rune stands for; enlightenment and *gnosis* (received as magical/divine knowledge). The rune belongs to the bringer of the black flames – the Múspell-born Loki.

So for *Heiðr* to *seið leikin* must mean that she practiced necromancy by invoking and evoking her daughter *Hel/Leikin* to bring death and disease¹. This is most likely connected with the ON belief that diseases arise from the act of being ridden by witches²: as *Hel* is allegorized riding her black *gandr* when she ascends from the un-

derworld to eat the dead in *Miðgarðr*, which in its turn could have been an allegory of *Hel's* essence possessing the world-tree's root and in that way spreading sicknesses and death to all life which is nourishing from the world-tree – thus *Hel* is riding her three-legged *gandr* *Heldrasill*. In *Saga Ólafs Tryggvasonar*, in *Snorri's Heimskringla*, we find a very interesting testimony about *Hel's* steed, *Leiknar hest*:

¹ Compare to Vigfusson, Rydberg, and Egilsson, 1931, *Lexicon Poeticum*.

² Cleasby-Vigfusson, 1874, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*.

Tíðhöggvit lét tiggi
Tryggva sonr fyrir styggvan
leiknar hest á lesti,
ljótvaxinn hræ Saxa.
Vinhróðigr gaf víða
vísi marga Frísa
blökku brúnt at drekka
blóð kveldriðu stóði.

It is skittish, *stygg*, foully grown, *ljótvaxinn*, black, *blökku*, it drinks blood, *drekka blóð*, and it is called a steed of a death-rider, *kveldriðu stóði*. The saga *Heimskringla* was written during the years of 1200 AD, which means it's a pretty late medieval saga. So whether this allegorization of *Hel's* steed is a remnant from an early ON mythology or not we don't know. However, without me being too modern in thinking, I believe that this kind of a metaphor for *Hel's* Nifl-steed could have some truth in it. Chthonic monsters and troll were strongly believed to be deformed and malignant, even before the Christian influences corrupted the original body of the ON sagas. Just take *Garmr*, *Fenrir* and *Jörmungandr* for example; they are not really friendly pets of the *ásir*, *Fenrir* is described as being a horrible giant beast: «*en Fenrisúlfr ferr með gapandi munn, ok er inn neðri kjöftr við jörðu, en in efri við himin. Gapa myndi hann meira, ef rúm væri til. Eldar brenna ór augum hans ok*

nösum»¹. Jormungandr is called *sú er goð fía*, the one hated by the gods – they are giant-monsters, wrathful and antagonistic. *Hymniskviða* for example explains multi-headed giants from the east:

sá hann ór hreysum
með Hymi austan
folkdrótt fara
fjölhöfðaða.²

HEL'S ATTRIBUTES

Necromancy is obviously attributed to Hel; she is the queen of deathly powers and keeper of the realm of the dead. She was viewed as a black shining hue that came to collect the dead or the ones dying. She embraces their spirits and her ally Niðhöggr gorges on their corpses, i.e. their dead remains. Hel's black power in Miðgarðr dwells in places of death and liminal areas, such as burial sites in general and crossroads. In Bang's irreplaceable work on Old Norwegian magical formulae *Norske Hexeformularer og Magiske Opskrifter* (1901-1902) he proves what significance certain black magical actions had in necromantic praxis, such as the use of crossroads, walking backwards, the number 3, and nocturnal workings. All these attributes are given to Hel and should work as a foundation in ON necromantic magic in Hel's name. She is death personified, and she was illustrated in the medieval sagas as riding on a rabid and pestilent black three-legged horse, which looked like death itself. This is undoubtedly a metaphor for Heldrasill itself, *drasill* in ON means horse and the skeletal roots of the underworld were seen as a three-legged horse: *Hel-drasill* – Hel's Horse. The Heldrasill also worked as the *gandr* of the deathly queen Hel, *gandr* being her black magical vehicle she is riding on when she travels – Hel rides the black three-legged horse and her mother Gullveig rides the thursian wolf (as Hyrrokin). The *gandr* became an attribute to giantesses in general and the *gandr* (pl. *gandar*) was originally viewed as a wolf (hence the ON word *vitnir*, wolf, which derives from the ON word *vitt*, magic; *vitnir*³ then being the magical wolf-*gandr* of the giantess, witch, and fjölkunnigr-seiðberandi)⁴, but also as monsters such as drag-

¹ "Fenrir shall fare with gaping mouth, and his lower jaw shall be against the earth, but the upper against sky, he would gape more if there were room. Fires blaze from his eyes and nose." *Gylfaginning* 51.

² "He saw a multi-headed lot fare with Hymir from the east out of the heaps of rocks."

³ Fenrir was called *Vitnir* in the ON poetry, most likely a remnant from the Hyrrokin-mythos which is symbolizing the wolf as being the 'carrier' or "conveyor" of (supernatural) knowledge as the ON word *vit* suggests. Compare this to the wolf's epithet *gífrs hest*, witch-horse, i.e. "the conveyor of a supernatural power."

⁴ Cleasby-Vigfusson, 1874, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*, and Egilsson, 1931, *Lexicon Poeticum*.

ons and serpents (as in Jörmungandr), representing the giantesses' staffs of power (*vølr* – *vølvá*) which in their turn became the witches' brooms in later folklore. This is connected to the ON belief in *kveldriða*, which was a giantess or witch who rode a *gandr* in the night or in the twilight, her *gandar* was known to be a wolf (*kveldriðu stóð*; the wolf, which is a derivation from the primitive ON word *gandr*, wolf), most likely remnants derived from the primitive Gullveig-mythos. And *kveld-* is not derived from the ON word *kveld*, evening or dusk, but from the ON word *kvelja* as in to torment or kill. So a correct translation of *kveldriða* would be a death-rider or a torment-rider. The view upon the *kveldriða* fits also better with the equivalent *myrkriða*. *Gífr* and *túnriða* are also connected to the entity *kveldriða*; «*túnriður leika lofti á*» (*Hávamál* 155), "hedge-riders play in the air". *Túnriða*, hedge-rider, was a "witch" or a ghost who flew around in the air, thus the Old Scandinavian people believed that *túnriða* rode on their hedges and the tops of houses during the nights. The *gífr* was a name for witches or fiends, as in *gífrs hestar*, witch-horses, which was an epithet for the wolf. ON *hest* in mythology meant not just horse but many times carrier or conveyer, and the wolf was viewed as being the giants' and witches' horse, and ships were called sea-horses and even sea-wolves.

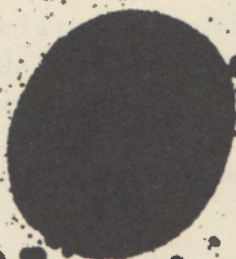
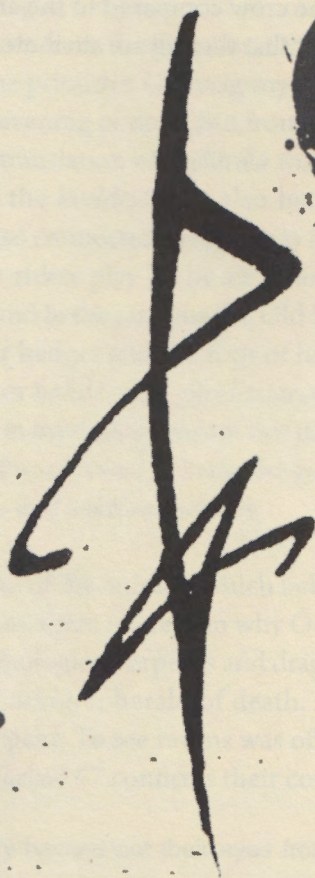
The raven was also seen as one of the animals which belonged to the possessors of the death-aspect. In my opinion there is a reason why Óðinn's underworld-spies are ravens. Ravens were like mythological serpents and dragons in the way that they represented a messenger – *Heljarhrafn*; herald of death. Ravens symbolized the black death: airborne and intelligent. To see ravens was often seen as a bad omen; as if Hel herself was present. *Sólarljóð* 67 confirms their connection to Hel:

...Hel's ravens violently hacked out their eyes from their skulls.

The raven is naturally a symbol of death; the flying black bird who seeks places of death. The raven is considered an omnivore, but he is very often a scavenger living off carrion, this is how he naturally becomes a metaphor for death, he is often scouting for cadavers. Hunters in Sweden have told me that if you go out in the woods and shoot a round with your rifle ravens will soon gather around you. Indeed, if you have been close to a raven and had the chance to look into his black lustrous eyes you know that it is not you who is observing him, it is he who observes you. When you see a flying raven at dusk cawing his melancholy, you soon understand why the raven has been an omen and herald of death for ages. The raven also has a habit of nesting close to humans, simply because he is no hunter and it is easy to steal from us. Back in the superstitious times this of course gave people the uncomfortable feeling that death was their neighbor. The scientific name of the species is *Corvus*

Corax, and in the same genus there is a smaller Corvus: the crow. The crow is not that different from the raven as a bird or in folklore and mythos. In the ON sagas Gullveig turned into a crow and her daughter Hel has ravens, with the attributes given to the raven and the crow compared to the attributes given to both Gullveig and Hel, there is no doubt that they all are attributed and interlinked to each other.





The Offspring

Jormundgandr, Fenrir and Hel are the mythological children of Gullveig and Loki, the most feared thursian monsters throughout the entire mythology. They were conceived by Loki eating Gullveig's heart three times after she had been burned, as her heart was not burnt (because of its rime-cold essence). Jormungandr being the serpent that encircles Miðgarðr, hence his epithet Miðgarðsormr¹; he is an allegorization of what snakes through the worlds and encloses them with the thursian venom – Nifl's tortuous venom – Hvergelmis eitrár. This metaphor could be seen as a serpent-like power which circulates darkness and adversary in the worlds. He controls the worlds by enfolding them. Jormungandr represents both water/ice and fire as a sea-monster and a serpent. Fenrir is the second son and he is a wolf, so big his lower jaw rests on the ground and his upper jaw touches the sky, so much drool oozes out from his blood-stained mouth that the river called Ván came out of it. He is the uncontrolled force, the flames' hunger and the oceans' thirst. Garmr, Hati and Sköll represent him, the restless and ceaseless hunters who aim to swallow the moon and the sun. Fenrir's abode is Járnviðr with his mother Gullveig; there they spawn thurs-wolves and werewolves together. Fenrir represents the fire of Múspellzheimr and Loki's trait. Hel is the divine manifestation of death; which is self-explanatory, but with a much deeper sense and purpose. She is the ruler of Niflheimr and everything within it, hence her epithet Nifl-Hel. It is said that she comes at night upon her three-legged pestilent horse to reap humans. Hel represents the water/ice of Niflheimr and Gullveig's trait.

¹ Gylfaginning 34.

^{2&3} Rooth, 1961, *Loki in Scandinavian Mythology*.

All three of them, Jormundgandr, Fenrir and Hel, are part of the supernatural beings which are connected to the entities called the "children of Cain"². Rooth also explains that "Cain becomes the father, not only of monsters, but also of all defective and deformed creatures"³. This is a mythological aspect that has been adopted by the ON people to describe the monstrous giants.

*

Fenrir, the *wolf of death*, the *ásir's* most feared antagonist
 Fenrir, the *wolf of greediness*, Óðinn's bane and Týr's enfeebler
 Fenrir, *second born* of Gullveig and Loki
 Fenrir, *þursgandr*, Hyrrokin's cruel companion
 Fenrir, *þursvitnir*, the mighty wrath of Járnaviðr
 Fenrir, the *grandness of the thurses*, His jaws reach from soil to sky
 Fenrir, the *strength of the thurses*, once fettered by the weak Lædingr,
 which He shattered in mockery
 Fenrir, the *powerfulness of the thurses*, once fettered by the weak Drómi,
 which He shattered in glory
 Fenrir, the *assiduosity of the thurses*, once fettered by Gleipnir from Svartálfa-
 heimr, which shall shatter at Ragna Røk

*

The Antagonist, the Opponent, the Adversary.

FENRIR

The cold and dispassionate eyes wander over the dark and misty lands from the snow-clad rock where he stands; the windows of cold hunger are a legacy from his mother. The inextinguishable hunger stems from the ever-flaming insides of the beast, his appearance is made for cold, but his inside is an ever-flaming torch which reach out in rage through his jaws of death. The flaming core is a legacy from his father. He is Fenrir the mighty; the one called The Wolf, because he is the essence of the wolf-entity, he is the first wolf, father of the wolf-race, and father of werewolves. He spawned abhorrent and deformed demons with his mother, their lust is his hunger, a loathsome and corrupt sexual nature which is unnatural and profane – lawless and formless – their communion is above human nature, it supercedes the gods' procreation. It is the way of para-creation: *the act of creating what is not supposed to be created*. They create lawlessness in a world of law; they create war in a world of structure; they create antithesis and oppositions; they create world-destroyers and enemies to the world of the cosmos. The wolf is the allegory of the wild and untamed force that dwells deep within the darkness and encircles you without you knowing it. And like the lightening thrust out his burning arm, the wolf springs out of the dark and locks his jaws around you. He is an allegory of the malice in the abyss; the hateful fiend and his allies who wish to destroy the faith and hope of the world and to damn them to perdition.

As Fenrir is a mythological offspring of Gullveig, the authors wanted to make an allegory of an aspect of Gullveig (and Loki) separately from her own entity. Gullveig's power is such a complex mass of energies that they cannot keep together; some parts of her essence release themselves from their matrix and strides away by its own will-power and assiduousness, and become separate entities; independent and self-governing magical wills who turn themselves into thursian giants.

Fenrir holds Gullveig's ferocious aspect; he is a rabid and destructive power which brings forth ruin and stunning potency. He is the bestial thurs-wolf, wrathful and uncontrolled, something that a life-worshipper would do anything to keep away from – as he is ferocity unleashed. Deformed and untamed he strides on his own paths only, everything in his way he plows down with his talons of hunger; a hunger of an assiduous purpose, not for the calming of his belly. He is spawned in darkness and in darkness he dwells; in Járnvíðr, the depths of the underworld, he has his abode – howling in restlessness, breeding grim races (*éttir*) of wolves and werewolves, and stalking the rim to the worlds, agitated and edgy, with the gaze of a starving and irate hunter. The inner eye fixed upon the main target, this he never loses, this he forever fantasies about, this he is preparing himself for every second of his existence. Indeed, as he is the strongest and the spearhead of his *éttir*, he will without doubt and questioning take out the strongest and mightiest of his opponents: Óðinn. Fenrir laughs at the thought or his mother's seering of killing him; he is obsessed with the idea of it, and he cannot wait until the moment when he is standing face to face with Óðinn and ripping him in two as he spits Múspell's flames at his naked spirit till it incinerates. Gullveig has already seen it, it will be done!

The derivation of Fenrir's name has been discussed but I have not seen a convincing or satisfying theory yet. My own theory is that the name derives from the OI word *fenna*, covered with snow; I'm thinking of Fenrir's origin: the snow-covered lands of Járnvíðr, due to its location close to Niflheimr. In *Baldrs Draumar* Fenrir's mother is said to be resting in a snow-covered grave: «Þá reið Óðinn fyrir austan dyrr, þar er hann vissi völu leiði... snivin snævi», "Then Óðinn rode to the east of the door, as he knew where the witch lay... snowed over by snow." This might have been a common idea for the monsters of Járnvíðr to do as they wait for the day of wrath: Ragna Røk. If the verb *fenna* was to be made into a noun, *fenr*, the one covered with snow, it could easily have been made into the name *Fenr-ir*. Sophus Bugge discusses Fenrir's name in *The Home of the Eddic Poems with Especial Reference to the Helgi-Lays*, 1899, where he stated that the ending *-rir* did not exist in the ON language; he says:

The name Fenrir, or Fenrisúlfr, has been explained as if it were a genuine Scandinavian derivative of ON *fen* in the poetical meaning of that word, viz. 'sea,' and designated the monster as a water-demon. But this explanation cannot be correct; for there does not exist in Old Norse any productive derivative ending *-rir*, gen. *-ris*.

¹ Compare the masculine noun *hirðir* under *a*-stems to Fenr-ir. Palm, 2004, *Vikingarnas Språk*.

Well, the ending *-ir* (genitive *-is*) did exist¹, both as nominative cases in singular and plural.

Fenrir is also called Vánargandr, which connects his name with his sibling's Jörmungandr. Vánargandr means "the wolf or the monster of the river Ván", and it is an epithet recalling Fenrir's imprisonment when he had a sword between his jaws, which resulted in a poisonous river from his saliva running from his mouth, and this river was called Ván.

Bugge also says in his book (which I mentioned above):

"While the wolf Fenrir has to some extent its prototype in Behemoth, the Mithgarthsorm has its prototype in Leviathan. In Job xl. Leviathan is associated with Behemoth as a mighty creature similar in nature. In Scandinavian mythical stories, the Mithgarthsorm and the wolf Fenrir appear side by side; they are even represented as brothers. The Icelanders thought of the Mithgarthsorm as lying in the sea, surrounding all lands, and biting its own tail. This concept is taken directly from the Christian concept of Leviathan. Bede says: Leviathan animal terram complectitur tenetque caudam in ore suo. In the Christian Middle Ages, the similarity between the Mithgarthsorm and Leviathan was so striking to the Icelanders that they identified the two. Thus in an old book of homilies, we find Miðgarðsormr written over leviapan as a gloss."

Fenrir is of an amorphous entity and thereby seen as the father of werewolves. He is a destructive and constructive power that hates to be bound, he hates form and law. He has immeasurable strength which predates the gods by times forgotten. He crushes everything in his way until he finds freedom as in boundless eternity, the lawless state that his entity craves. Fenrir cannot be controlled or dominated, he *only* strides his own way. If you want his guidance you have no other choice than to follow him in his footsteps or he will tear you apart like you were nothing. This is allegorized in the saga when the *ásir* tried to bind him down with magically enforced chains. Týr was the only one brave enough to put his arm in Fenrir's giant mouth in proof of good will. Although, Fenrir saw right through their deceitful trick and tore off half of Týr's arm. Fenrir roams in his territory: the darkness of the underworld in the sunless valleys, as he is waiting impatiently for the day when his leader will unleash him upon the worlds to spread his darkness and wrath of sub-

limity – and she will, as Angrboða is Fenrir's mother, companion, and leader. He and his brothers Sköll and Hati will join their dark mother in avenging the tyrants who call themselves *ásmegin*, "the heavenly divine power" – the gods who brag about their *ásmóðr*, "the divine strength of Þórr", which is nothing more than a replica of the thurses ultimateness, their *ásríki*, "Heaven", which slowly fades, and their proud *ásapórr*, "Þórr", whom will soon drink the rime-water of Fenrir's sibling.

Jormungandr, *the great wand*, Þórr's bane
 Jormungandr, *Élivágar's spittle*, crusher of the worlds
 Jormungandr, *first born* of Gullveig and Loki
 Jormungandr, *the great serpent*, the grasp and the terror
 Jormungandr, *pursgandr*, Hyrrokin's cruel companion
 Jormungandr, *the great spike*, the contagion in the great ocean
 Jormungandr, *the poisonous spear* impaled in the heart of Ásgarðr

JORMUNGANDR

Is Jormungandr male or female? That is a question that will probably stay unanswered forever. Although Jormungandr might be androgynous, a quality both Gullveig and Loki show in the ON sagas; Gullveig got Loki pregnant with Jormungandr, Fenrir and Hel. As Fenrir represents fire and masculinity and Hel water and femininity; Jormungandr represents both fire and water – masculinity and femininity. A mysterious paradox that shows us how complex the thurses are in the sagas, and how unnatural they appeared – they represent, in the sagas, lawlessness and amorphousness. With confidence I say that Jormungandr has similar mythological qualities as Leviathan in the Christian and Jewish mythology. *The Book of Job* allegorizes Leviathan, the great sea monster, with details that are analogous with Jormungandr in the ON mythology:

Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook? Or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down? Canst thou put a hook into his nose? Or bore his jaw through with a thorn? Will he make many supplications unto thee? Will he speak soft words unto thee? Will he make a covenant with thee? Wilt thou take him for a servant for ever? Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? Or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens? Shall the companions make a banquet of him? Shall they part him among the merchants? Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons? Or his head with fish spears?

Out of his mouth go burning lamps, and sparks of fire leap out. Out of his nostrils goeth smoke, as out of a seething pot or caldron. His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth...

When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid: by reason of breakings they purify themselves. The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold: the spear, the dart, nor the habergeon. He esteemeth iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood. The arrow cannot make him flee: slingstones are turned with him into stubble. Darts are counted as stubble: he laugheth at the shaking of a spear. Sharp stones are under him: he spreadeth sharp pointed things upon the mire. He maketh the deep to boil like a pot: he maketh the sea like a pot of ointment.

Just from this quotation we can draw many parallels with Jǫrmungandr's ON mythos, and I think it is obvious that they share essence, attributes and manifestation.

Sadly, the very limited mythos about Jǫrmungandr and his/her relationship with Gullveig do not give us much, but by using our imagination we could hypothesize that it was thought of, in the Old Norse mythology, as Jǫrmungandr being Gullveig and Loki's conjoined *Will*: a manifestation of their purpose if you will. When Loki devoured Gullveig's rime-heart he might not really have given birth to a serpent, it might have been an allegory for their conjoined *Wills* taking form. Jǫrmungandr shows up at Ragna Røk and kills Þórr, but Gullveig is, strangely enough, not mentioned during this final battle. So the serpent might have been her mighty *gandr* (*jǫrmund-*, mighty, *-gandr*, a magical vehicle, or an object used by a sorcerer)¹ which she sent in her place to kill her archenemy Þórr.² As Þórr has tried to kill Gullveig's children: Jǫrmungandr in the saga *Hymiskviða* and during Ragna Røk in *Völuspá*; Hel according to *Skáldskaparmál* 11; Fenrir, and finally Loki and Gullveig herself several times (e.g. in *Gylfaginning* and *Skáldskaparmál* 11: *Hyrrokkin dó fyrri*). The anti-cosmic poison, *eit*, in ON mythology represents the destructive thursian influence which is absorbed by the world tree's roots and in that way infecting the gods and all life. Within Thursatru³ the *eit* represents the *anti-cosmic gnosis* which is spread by the Chaos-powers to enlighten the receptive and to "melt off" or "kill" the *Ego* and the *cosmic illusions*. This poison is the arms of Jǫrmungandr, and might as well be his true Self. It is not strange to allegorize mythical water with a serpent; rivers normally look like giant serpents. Indeed, Jǫrmungandr spit his *eit* on Þórr, which kills him, in the seering of Ragna Røk, so he is definitely interlinked with the ON concept of the *eit*. With this said I want to add that the explanation of Jǫrmungandr laying in the bottom of the ocean and there encircling the world, Miðgarðr, is for me a metaphor for the *eit* taking form as Jǫrmungandr and holds Miðgarðr in its grip – saying that the *eit* has contaminated the whole creation, through the roots of the world tree; "from under the bottom of the sea", and that there is no way around it.

Jǫrmungandr is called «*sú er goð fía*», "the one the gods hate", in *Hymiskviða*. It is a very severe appellation and shows that he/she was as much an antagonist, opponent, and adversary as his/her siblings.

¹ Compare to Fenrir's epithet Vánargandr. *Gandr* also has the meaning of divine monsters such as thursian wolves, serpents, and dragons.

² This however reminds me of Lilith and how she used the serpent.

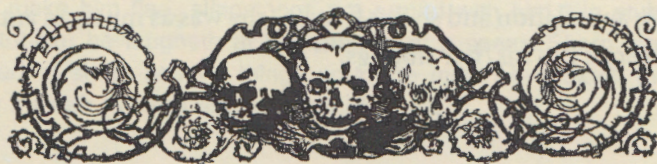
³ See the part of this book called *Fjølkyngi*.

HATI, SKÖLL, AND GARMR

Grímnismál and *Gylfaginning* illuminate us with the knowledge that the thursian wolf Fenrir, also called Hróðvitnir, is the father of Hati, as Hati is called Hati Hróðvitnisson in *Gylfaginning* 12 and Hati, «*hann er Hróðvitnis sonr*» in *Grímnismál* 39. *Gylfaginning* continues and says:

A giantess dwells to the east of Miðgarðr, in the forest called Járnvíðr: in that wood dwell the troll-women, who are known as Járnvíðjur (Ironwood-women). The old giantess bears many giants for sons, and all in the shape of wolves; and from this source are these wolves sprung (i.e. Fenrir, Hati, and Sköll). The saying runs thus: from this race shall come one that shall be mightiest of all, he that is named Mána-garmr (Moon-Garmr); he shall be filled with the flesh of all those men that die, and he shall swallow the moon, and sprinkle with blood the heavens and all the lair; thereof shall the sun lose her shining, and the winds in that day shall be unquiet and roar on every side.

“Mánagarmr shall be filled with the flesh of all those men that die, and he shall swallow the moon”. This line explains very much, it shows us that the name Mána-garmr is both linked to Garmr, the guardian dog in the underworld, and to Hati who chases the moon. And the words “he shall be filled with the flesh of all those men that die” refers most definitely to Garmr who attacks and devour the dead in the underworld, and the words “he shall swallow the moon” refers to Hati who chases the moon and at Ragna Røk catches and devours it. This in my opinion proves that Garmr and Hati are in fact the same thursian *wolf*. It also means that Fenrir is Garmr’s father as well as Hati’s and their mutual mother is then naturally Gullveig: “the giantess dwells to the east of Miðgarðr, in the forest called Járnvíðr... (she) bears many giants for sons, and all in the shape of wolves; and from this source are these wolves sprung.” And concerning Garmr, dogs have frequently been used by humans to guard their grounds, so I dare to hypothesize that the Old Norse people thought wolves and dogs were very close in nature.



Gullveig & Lilith

All that a woman wants to be; Gullveig is – because she has no feminine weakness or submissiveness. She is the representation of the ultimate feminine power.

FOREWORD

Something that struck me in my *Edda*-studies was that most of the ásir have wives and they are living together in Ásgarðr, much like us humans. However, the giant-couples never live together; it might say in some few stanzas that in this or that yard a giant couple lives, but they are never depicted as both of them really living there under the same roof. This is a very interesting detail and the symbolism of this is something that must be brought up, as I will soon explain. I have an interest in other goddesses such as Lilith, Hecate, Kali and Ereshkigal, and this has brought me a deeper understanding of the high feminine principle and its role in the mythology and of the essence of the divinities. By understanding other traditions and mythologies I understand ours better, the Old Hellenic and Mesopotamian ones are fundamental influences of the Germanic religion and have thereby had an impact in universal elements amongst the mythological characteristics and essences. What I am trying to say is that both Lilith and Hecate are linked in essence to Gullveig and her daughter Hel, as I have explained before, and they share certain fundamental characteristics such as for example the ultimate elemental femininity in the dark goddess.

Fundamental aspects of especially Gullveig and Lilith are self-independence, strength, rebellion, and motherhood.

Giants represent the lawlessness, e.g. unnatural essence, attributes and manifestations, and the ásir represent law and order, e.g. natural essence, attributes and manifestations.

*

GULLVEIG; THE UNDERWORLDLY MOTHER, CRONE, AND MAID

She first came out of Chaos as a black icy essence, infesting creation with a hostile intent. She, the Old One, then embraced the seed of Yggdrasill in the beginning of time and injected the poison which is metaphorically called waters of Chaos. She made her abode by the young roots of Yggdrasill, in the shadows of the world tree and brilliant stars. Close to the icy and misty world of eternal winter she dwells so that its cold and darkness can linger in her valleys in a world under men and gods – the rulers of the upper worlds. She knows them well as she lurks amongst them all in the guise of their own. Cunning she is, the wise one, drawing her veil of darkness over their existence – sending her beast to devour the silvery eye, sending her beast to devour the golden eye; he guards her realm and gives her sons and daughters. Crafty she is, nourishing men and the gods with the foul water of her icy well; from where all waters, oceans and wells spring. The shining spirit of the old water is black and foul for men and gods.

She is the old one of the lower world and the mother to the ruler of the lower world. She is the wise one who bore the serpent who keeps the world of men, the wolf who tames the upper world of the *ásir's* races, and the keeper of the underworld.

I have shown that Gullveig is a mother-giantess, as she in Járnsviðr produces the demon-hordes. The sagas say too that Barngar are coming from those woods and tracts, and also Loki comes with Naglfar out from the east at Ragna Røk. As it is told in *Völuspá*:

In the east in Járnsviðr where the Old One sat,
and there she bore Fenrir's offspring.

And:

The ship comes from the east,
over the sea the Múspell's Sons shall come,
and Loki steers.

All of Gullveig's offspring are monsters and hybrids; there are even incest-related suggestions in *Völuspá* between Gullveig and Fenrir. Her most famous children are of course Jörmungandr, Fenrir, and Hel; a giant snake, a giant wolf, and a giantess

– all of them are deformed Chaos-creatures – anti-cosmic essences which have taken an unnatural cosmic form. Járnnviðr is located in the farthest east in the depths of Jötunheimr, a dark place, where only malign and anti-cosmic forces dwell. Their function is comprehended as wrathful because they stand for the reaction of the wrathful acosmic Chaos, a so-called dissolving impulse, towards all boundaries and laws, which are of cosmic nature (Chaos has no boundaries and laws). Járnnviðr could be looked upon as the sphere of the black moon; where the demon-mother procreates her kin, a portal to the dark powers – to the anti-cosmic and dissolving impulse. Esoterically speaking, I see the thurses as parts of the impulse; in their highest aspects maybe the whole impulse – what Chaos' formless energies have been bound into, or bound them into.

The impulse can allegorically be pictured as a storm of anti-cosmic powers, which the ON mythology explains with the hordes of demons, werewolves, thurs-wolves, thurses and all kind of monsters storming out of Járnnviðr when the war-cry of Ragna Røk echoes throughout the dark forests of the Old One.¹

I want to remind you that Gullveig-Angrboða is seen as the mother-goddess/giantess, and as Heiðr she takes the form of the witch-aspect and becomes the giantess of black witchcraft. She is the witch who walks the earth around the farm-houses under the name Heiðr, and teaches "wicked" women the dark runes and seiðr. As the keeper of Járnnviðr and procreator of the thurs-monsters she goes under the name Angrboða and is called "She the Old One" – *In Aldna*.

¹ It's not just from Járnnviðr, in the sagas the whole world is attacked from the underworld and Jötunheimr by this impulse of malevolent thurses. I get the image of the Chaos-ocean flooding the universe from all its corners.

This shows that she bears the mother- and the witch-aspects. Additionally, it shows that she is linked to the moon, the wolves, and werewolves.

LILITH

I would like to mention that Lilith had been worshiped for more than at least two thousand years before the German mythology and worship appeared, and that we have to bear in mind that the Germanic religion derives from places like for example Mesopotamia and Hellas. Lilith's name appeared at the earliest in the Sumerian king list approximately from 2400 BC. Lilith is the female goddess of darkness, the bride of Satan. She is the first wife of Adam who refused to submit to masculine dominance because she claimed to be equal — and by her rebellious flame she rejected

Adam and voiced the secret name of God and took off to the deserted lands at the Red Sea where lecherous demons dwelt. At this place she stayed and bore demonic hordes of hundreds of demons every day. This successful rejection of submission and utterance of enormity towards God could without difficulty be seen as analogous with Gullveig's exodus from the world (*Miðgarðr*) to the underworld (*Járnviðr*) away from God's residences. Gullveig refused to be overpowered, and as she was reborn every time the gods killed her, she obviously showed them that it was impossible to overpower her; thus her ceaseless repulsion of submission. To compare the utterance of God's secret name is probably too farfetched, and it might be too mystical as an allegory, but Gullveig's seering of the god's (*ásir*) and the cosmos' apocalypse could be compared in the symbolism of the action of stupefying the position of God, to gain the result of deadening and weakening.

So she migrated to the dark land called *Járnviðr*, just like Lilith, and there Gullveig bore swarms of demonic monsters, looked upon as the *world-destroyers*, just like the spawns of Lilith are called *the plagues of mankind*. On the note of procreation of demons it is important to bring up the detail that Lilith is called the soul of all the beasts, and Gullveig the mother of all wolves and werewolves. Another interesting detail in this context is that some believe that Lilith lived in a cave in the deserted

land by the Red Sea. An ancient Mesopotamian tablet says about Lilith: "Oh, Flyer in a dark chamber"¹, which could be imagined to have been a cave. A cave could be a symbol of a place in the underworld, "within the earth", which connects her abode with Gullveig's *Járnviðr*, which lies in the underworld.

¹ Patai, 1990, *The Hebrew Goddess*.

This reminds me of what Jacob Grimm once said: "for a cave covers, and so does the nether world." This metaphoric comparison brings another myth about Lilith to mind; it is when Lilith and Adam were created as one and Lilith's soul was lodged into the Great Abyss. This Great Abyss could be mythologically equated with the Old Norse underworld, which is many times explained as being an abyss. The same goes, as I understand it, for what the Jewish mythology calls "The Other Side."

Lilith is said to have been initially seen as a storm demon associated with destructive winds and to be a spreader of disease and death. This is strongly analogous with Gullveig's aspect as a "giantess of the eastern (sea) storms." This mythological aspect of Gullveig comes from her role as Hyrrokin, who gets called upon at Baldr's funeral by Óðinn himself, as not even the strongest *áss* of them all (Þorr) could manage to move Baldr's funeral ship to put it out to sea. Gullveig came from the east (it's where her abode *Járnviðr* is said to be located) as Hyrrokin, riding on a giant wolf (*þursulfr*), and with one hand she lifted up the ship and blew on it, and it

stormed out to sea. This myth connects her with eastern storms and feared feminine power. In another saga it is said about Gullveig: "Gýmir's primevally cold witch bears ships amongst storming waves in the jaws of Ægir." Gýmir is one of Gullveig's husbands throughout the myths, and Ægir is an ocean giant, and he is also looked upon being the same as Gýmir.

As I have stated earlier, Gullveig is also looked upon as a giantess of diseases, death and destruction; she carries this out in the world in the form of something the ancient people called *Fræ Aurboðu*, Aurboða's Seed – the carrier of the poison. Philosophically I would say that this "seed" could also be compared to the nocturnal and malicious impulsion and persuasion Lilith has on both men and women, sexually and black magically. However, the seed might be analogous mostly to the theory that Lilith is in fact the serpent that offers Eve the fruit from the tree of knowledge, the "fruit" here being a symbol of a seed that impregnates Eve with Qayin and his brother. Gullveig is not really mentioned anywhere in the Old sagas as being a sexual persuader, but *Völuspá* tells us this:

Heiðr her name was,
to houses she came,
the seeress with accurate prophecies.
She wielded witchcraft,
she conjured disease,
she invoked Leikin,
always was she loved
by wicked women.

Lilith is also said to have "attached herself to" Qayin and bore his demon-children, many in number. This correlates perfectly with the myth of Járnsviðr, where Gullveig bore her son Fenrir's children, many in number. As it is said in *Völuspá*:

In the east in Járnsviðr the Old One sat,
and there bore Fenrir's offspring.

It is also said that Lilith forced herself upon Adam, against his will, and thereby bore his children (demons, spirits and Lilin), and they sometimes "ascend from that earth to this world upon which we

¹ Patai, 1990, *The Hebrew Goddess*.

stand"¹. This *ascension* must mean that these demons, spirits and Lilin came from a world below, and as a metaphor and mythological comparison I take this as that they ascended from the underworld – *the Other Side*. This again is analogous to Gullveig and her hosts of children in the underworldly dominion of Járnsviðr. Here are

some Old Norse thursian analogies: demons; ON *fløgð*, spirits; ON *andar*, Lilin; ON *Járnviðjur*.

Lilith is also believed to be Samael's twin-sister and mate, and they were emanated as one below the "Throne of Glory", as androgynous beings. The Teutonic Germans were obviously very inspired by this while the Germanic mythology was taking shape. Gullveig and Loki, which are the most known vicious husband and wife within the northern tradition, are mates and they had both a known androgynous nature.

About the moon, Lilith is explained as being connected to the moon, and the moon phases being a symbolism of her transformation. Gullveig is connected to the moon as a mother of demons in the forms of wolves (*pursulfar*), and her wolf-children are hunting the moon and the sun to devour them, attempting to destroy the world. The complex system of Qabalah and Kliffot, and the lunar connections to Lilith cannot be compared with Gullveig, as the Old Norse tradition did not have that kind of a complex system of gods and demons. Neither was Gullveig ever mentioned as being connected to the moon directly.

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THE DARK FEMININE NEXUS

I have endeavored to show that Hel is the younger form of the dark feminine goddess in the Old Norse tradition; where she is the daughter. The elder dark feminine form of the goddess is her mother Gullveig. With this proven, they are in certain aspects in analogy with Lilith and her daughter Naamah in the Kliffotic mythology and tradition, where Lilith is sometimes called Ama Lilith which means Mother Lilith, and the OI word amma, mother or grandmother, is obviously connected to the same Ama in the old name of Lilith. Amma has never been connected to Gullveig in the sagas, but as a mother-giantess very closely connected to the Lilith mythos I would say it would be correct to give Gullveig the epithet *Amma Gullveig*. Furthermore, according to Gunnell and Göran Liljenroth in their book *Den Götiska Gudinnan I Nordisk Mytologi* (1995) Hel was called *Ama* in a pre-Viking era. I have never come across this information elsewhere; regardless, it is very interesting. Lilith is also called Lilith-Taninsam, Lilith the poisonous serpent¹, a name that represents something similar to Gullveig and her son/daughter Jörmungandr².

¹ Temple of the Black Light, 2002, *Liber Azerate*.

² Her serpent child connects her to serpents and dragons, as her children represent hers and Loki's aspects. Remember that both Fenrir and the Serpent of Midgard possess epithets that end with *-gandr*, a word representing divine monsters as in wolves, serpents, and dragons.



Járnviðr

It's very hard to put iron into place in the context of this book, and I have thought long and hard in order to be able to really understand why Gullveig's final abode would be called the Ironwood, Járnviðr, and I'm still bewildered. I will first present sundry theories that I've come up with concerning the name Járnviðr – even if some of them might seem a bit far-fetched – and then I finalize with my conclusions.

It's easy for one who follows the left hand path to think impulsively of traditional black magic where iron corresponds to Mars and the color red – iron is an attribute of the Egyptian god Set, the Roman war god Mars, the Greek Ares, and the Babylonian god Nergal: gods of war, the underworld and the dead, as iron most often reflects weaponry and bloodshed. Rust with its reddish color has a resemblance with coagulated blood and iron has been for long been connected to blood as it smells and tastes like iron. As for rust, it has been thought of being pestilent, in magical symbolism. To a certain extent this is analogous to Gullveig's complex character; it's probably misleading to call her a war-giantess, but she is the instigator of the rebellion of the thurs-race, the rise of Ragna Røk, as she and Loki are the ones who trigger this downfall of the worlds. However, the sagas are not directly calling her a war-giantess, neither a leader of wars, but indirectly representing her as one, and concerning the *folkvíg*-mythos in connection to her name she is definitely an outcome of war. She is coming to this world as three horrible thurs-giantesses and bringing its doom with her; she is in ON symbolism the very essence of the feminine destructive principle, and in ally with Loki they both constitute the absolute destruction – the bloodshed and the curse which Óðinn and his brothers brought upon the cosmos the day they killed and slaughtered Ýmir. Thereby Gullveig represents war and bloodshed as it is a means for her purpose and existence.

This brought me to make the same discovery Rydberg did; in *Hávamál* Rydberg noticed a detail, and it's the name of a giant called Ásviðr, which most likely belongs to the giant called “the friend of the gods”, Mímir. And according to Rydberg, Ásviðr and Ásvinr are the same word, meaning *áss*-friend, which caught my interest. It means that the ON suffix *-viðr* could mean “friend”, and that gives a new approach to Járnviðr; which in this interpretation could mean “iron-friend”/“friend of iron”.

This interpretation is not far from the analogies concerning Gullveig's name and Járnsviðr's role throughout the whole mythology, especially at Ragna Røk, as it is told in *Völuspá*:

The ship (Naglfar) comes from the east,
over the sea the Múspell's Sons shall come,
and Loki steers.
Monster's spawn will follow the wolf.

"Iron-friend" in my opinion has strong arguments in meaning "warrior", "happy in battle" or something similar. It would explain its purpose in the mythology: to spawn the monster-legions in preparation for Ragna Røk. It is told in the sagas that both Gullveig and Fenrir are producing monster-progeny in Járnsviðr; armies. However, they are not mentioned elsewhere in the myth but at Ragna Røk, when they storm out from this dark place – which gives me the feeling that they are only spawned for that reason. Furthermore, Gullveig's name which could mean "goddess of war" corresponds very well with a place like this.

It is pretty clear that the pre-Christian Scandinavian people interpreted iron as something deadly, strong and dark. They called the áss-god Víðarr "the possessor of the Iron-shoe" after the myth in the *Edda* where everybody saved their shoe-sole for his one shoe so he could step on Fenrir's lower jaw. In the myth about the killing of Baldr we find that Frigg took an oath of iron (actually the text explains that she took that oath from everything in the universe but the mistletoe – but iron is one of the things that is mentioned and thereby one of the more important things, important enough to be worth mentioning). Furthermore, we have a prime example of the Old Norse peoples' distinguishing of iron as something strong; in this example stronger than the most feared giant Loki. It is told after Loki had been caught and blamed for having killed Baldr and been sent to imprisonment at the island Lyngvi, the ásir took his son's bowels and tied him down with them, and the bowels turned into iron – these shackles kept Loki bound until Ragna Røk. This shows how mighty Old Norse people thought iron was. If iron could tame the strength of the most powerful thurs of the underworld it must have been looked upon as one of the strongest materials known to them.

Another theory of mine is the one related to the myths about Lilith. As I can see the analogies in Gullveig and Lilith's mythologies and in their essence, some things connect them more than what you first think when you study both their mythological origins. First I want to remind you of how Gullveig came to dwell in the dark

place called Járnvíðr; after the *ásir* supposedly had captured her for the third time in her new disguise they realized that they could not kill her, and thereby banished her from all worlds above the underworld¹, and for obscured reasons her place in the underworld was called Járnvíðr. (The myth that Gullveig was banished from the gods and humans' worlds by Óðinn is *not* to be found in the ON sagas but in Saxo's medieval books, a hypothesis assumed to be true but for me very doubtful. Rydberg explains: "That the woman who in antiquity, in various guises, visited Asgard and

Midgard was believed to have had her home in the Ironwood of the East during the historical age down to Ragnarok is explained by what Saxo says - viz., that Odin, after his return and reconciliation with the Vans, banished the agents of the black art both from heaven and from earth. Here, too, the connection between Gullveig-Heid and Angurboða is manifest. The war between the Asas and Vans was caused by the burning of Gullveig by the former. After the reconciliation with the Asas this punishment cannot again be inflicted on the regenerated witch. The Asas must allow her to live to the end of time; but both the clans of gods agree that she must not show her face again in Asgard or Midgard."² The reason why I doubt this myth about Gullveig being banished by Óðinn after being burned three times to be true is that why would they all of a sudden be able to banish her from their worlds when they have been lacking the necessary power to do this before? It just does not make any sense to me. Whether she had always had this dark place or not is unknown to us today, but I must say that it makes much more sense that she has always had the place called Járnvíðr as her abode.

This short conclusion of Gullveig's "banishment" and mothering of "demons"³ is anyhow very similar to Lilith's mythology and origin, and I suspect that it is the myth of Lilith that inspired Saxo's account of Gullveig's "banishment". Lilith was banned by God and cast into the depths of the sea, also allegorized as the Great Abyss; which could be compared with the depths of the underworld where Gullveig was metaphorically "cast" by Óðinn. There was also the common knowledge that

Lilith could be bound by iron in the ancient times. A good example of this, one of many, is found on a bowl found in Persia, probably from 600 AD; the old incantation is meant to force out Lilith's hauntings from the owner's house and to bind her:

¹ It does not directly state in the sagas that the Ironwood lies in the underworld, but it does say that it lays in the east of Miðgarðr, and to the east of Miðgarðr lays the underworld. If you read the text that only refers to the underworld with no mention of the upper worlds, passages 34-40 in *Völuspá*, it describes different places in the underworld and in which cardinal points they lie, e.g. a river called Slíðr comes from the east (36) and Slíðr is one of Hvergelmir's eleven underworld rivers (*Grímnismál* 28, *Gylfaginning* 4), in the north lie the fields of darkness called Niðavellir (37), and in the east in Járnvíðr the Old One sat (40). Indirectly these coherent stanzas say that Járnvíðr lies in the east in the underworld. So the Ironwood must lie in the underworld.

² Rydberg, *Investigations into Germanic Mythology*, Part I.

³ In the mythology and in Old Icelandic called *Flagð/Flögð* and *Troll*.

Bound is the bewitching Lilith with a peg of iron in her nose;
 bound is the bewitching Lilith with pincers of iron in her mouth;
 bound is the bewitching Lilith, who haunts the house of Zakoy,
 with a chain of iron on her neck; bound is the bewitching Lilith
 with fetters of iron on her hands; bound is the bewitching Lilith
 with stocks of stone on her feet...¹

The understanding that Lilith could be bound by iron made me come to the conclusion that this is probably the foundation of how to bind evil in general. The fear of Lilith and her Lilin was huge in Eastern Europe in the elder times, and probably

¹Patai, 1990, *The Hebrew Goddess*.

still is, and it most certainly influenced the Germanic people who travelled through Europe and brought the mythological and religious influences with them to the north where the Old Scandinavian religion was under development. This strong influence is evidently shown in the ON mythology as Fenrir was bound by magical iron fetters on the island called Lyngvi in the middle of the black ocean called Ámsvartnir. Three times the *æsir* had to ask the dwarves to make these magical fetters; the two first fetters Fenrir sprang loose from, because of his thurs-strength. Loki had a similar fate when the *æsir* finally understood the anti-cosmic intentions of Loki and they seized him and bound him with magical iron fetters which the *æsir* made from the intestines of Loki's own son. They put Loki in the same location as his furious son Fenrir on the island Lyngvi in Ámsvartnir. Gullveig was eventually unveiled of her evil and destructive plans and was captured also, as told above. However, she was not bound in fetters, probably because her magic was too powerful for the *æsir*, which makes a lot of sense. As iron has been used to capture and bind demons and "evil" with, even to trap demons or evil spirits by enclosing them with iron, could this have been the case with the Járnsviðr? I am thinking about the old superstition that ghost, souls, witches etc., are driven back with "cold iron", and for example it is a tradition to surround cemeteries with iron fences to keep the souls within the cemetery. Iron was also used to keep evil out, i.e. from Christian churches. Something similar is said in *Helgakviða Hjörvarðssonar*, more exactly in *Hrímgerðarmál* 13: Atli says here that the fleet has ON *járnborgir*, which is here a defense of iron against witches or troll (*fálur*). This view of iron is not far from the myth of Loki and Sif's hair, when Loki had made a bet with the dwarf Sindri, and as the dwarf is about to win the bet Loki transforms himself into a fly and "stings" the dwarf just so that he cannot finish his powerful iron hammer, which would be given to Þórr and become the best defense against the rime-thurses, «*mest vörn í fyrir hrímþursum*» (*Skáldskaparmál* 43). Loki is here trying to make the dwarf fail in making this powerful iron weapon. All this could be compared with the wood being symbolically delimited by iron to keep the evil within it. It might have been a region

magically imprisoned metaphorically by iron – they basically tried to make a prison of iron which they thought could confine Gullveig. But just like her equal, Lilith, she was too powerful to be imprisoned or banished, she always came back for her immortal purposes:

Thrice burned,
thrice born,
oft, not seldom,
yet she still lives.

But there are a few things that still bother me with this hypothesis. First, the action of imprisoning Gullveig is not really of an ON mythological nature, because it is not like any other confinement that you can find in the ON literature. Loki and Fenrir got bound and kept in a cave, but according to the hypothesis above Gullveig supposedly got kept in a region, called the Ironwood, free to do whatever she wanted, e.g. having thursian offspring with her son Fenrir many in number. Indeed, nowhere in the ON sagas is it told that she got imprisoned or cast down into such confinement. Also, if she got imprisoned against her will in Járnsviðr, how was it possible for Gullveig to appear at Baldr's funeral to the *ásir's* aid? This is what makes me so uncertain in what this wood of iron really is.

Iron has many different meanings in traditions and folklore around the world. But something that most old cultures have in common is that iron symbolizes evil and darkness; destruction in a sense, as the iron was used mostly for weapons. Gullveig-Angrboða is actually Chaos' weapon within the alien creation called the cosmos, and she and her spouse and ally Loki are the spearheads who shall pierce the heart of the demiurge and his creation: the iron seen as a metaphor for the thurs-essence which was born out of the ore (Chaos). This process of iron could also be symbolized as a birth and transformation, and is again connected to the function of Gullveig as the mother-giantess. To compare all this and the Ironwood with a blacksmith and his workshop, the allegorization of a dark and evil place for a mother-giantess to procreate evil is very fitting. She spawns werewolves there; the transformation of Chaos-powers allegorized by wolfish monsters. To understand the symbolism of iron and transformation a bit better you can study the myths of the thurs Þjazi; the most excellent blacksmith in the Old Norse mythology, his magic was unconquerable and he transformed himself from the entity Valand into the wrathful thurs Þjazi. Iron born of ore (into weapons and tools) could be seen as the symbol of production and destruction. So if we see her abode or region as the place of darkness where evil is continually generated, the name Ironwood all of a sudden makes very much sense.

*

The iron-scythe is the symbol of transformation: the tool of production and the weapon of destruction. After Gullveig's seeds are spread the iron-scythe will shed.

*

The *Gylfaginning* saga tells us in short about the troll-women that inhabit the Ironwood; they are called Járnvíðjur: «þær tröllkonur er Járnvíðjur heita». This name gives me a feeling that the prefix *járn-* is an adjectival form which is suppose to explain a certain aspect of the characters; Járnvíðr the land and Járnvíðjur the inhabitants in my theory being an allegory of the inhabitants' mythological functional essence, not the law of the region. If we take a look at the older spelling of the ON word *járn*, *ísarn*, it is actually a combination of the ON words *íss*, ice, and *earn*, iron, which I found very interesting in this case. This might of course just be a coincidence and not have any etymological authenticity at all, but *ísarn* does have both *íss* and *earn* within its body. We all have most certainly heard of the saying cold iron or cold steel, this is an old folkloric saying which was supposed to mean that iron always felt very cold and in folklore was known to ward off ghosts and spirits. This was common knowledge even in Old Scandinavia and there seem to have existed parallels between ice and iron. As allegories in poetry I can see many similarities between ice and iron; the coldness, the deathly aspect, icicles look like daggers and swords, and their silvery resemblance. It is not impossible that the word *ísarn* had a much deeper and extended meaning in the ON language, a meaning that has withered through the ages. *Ísarn* might have been connected to the rime aspect of *hrímþursar*, it may even have been seen as another usage of the word *hrím*. This is only speculations of course and with allegorizations you can take it very far if you do not put an end to it. Anyhow, if the ON word *járnviðr* is an outcome of an older version of the word *ísarnviðr* we have something very interesting, because *ísarn-* fits much better with the inhabitants' name *Járnvíðjur*. *Ísarnviðjur* would, according to my theory, connect them to the rime aspect as in rime-thurses, because they are thurses, and as Gullveig's children they must be of the rime essence too; *Gylfaginning* saga says that the Járnvíðjur are the children of the old giantess – Gullveig – *in gamla gýgr*. With this hypothesis the Ironwood might have meant to be seen as the region of the rime essence; a dark and cold place deep in the eastern part of the underworld, connected to the depths of Niflheimr (I believe Járnvíðr lays directly above Niflheimr in the underworld, so the Nifl-cold most certainly affects Járnvíðr with eternal extreme winters and ice – see my chart Heldrasill in the appendix), a place where

ice is so old and primitive that it is as solid as iron and even shimmers like iron – the shade of silver. The usage of the word iron in the name Járnvíðr would have meant “the ever cold”, as iron seems to always be cold. It’s very important to remember that the authors of the sagas in Old Scandinavia were very much into explaining all elements and entities in deep metaphors; their allegories were often so complex it is hard to translate and understand their full meanings today. To use iron for a metaphor for ice would be a reasonable thing to do. Snorri tells us that this connection was noticed in Old Scandinavia, as he tells us in *Gylfaginning* 11: “...horses that drew the chariot of the sun, which the gods had fashioned, for the world’s illumination, from that glow which flew out of Múspellzheimr. Those horses are called: Árvakr and Alsviðr; and under the shoulders of the horses the gods set two windbags to cool them, but in some records that is called ‘iron-coolness.’”¹ “Iron-coolness” is called in OI *ísarnkol*, much similar to what I just discussed.

¹ «... hesta, er drógu kerru sólarinnar, þeirar er goðin höfðu skapat til at lýsa heimana af þeiri síu, er flaug ór Múspellsheimi. Þeir hestar heita svá, Árvakr ok Alsviðr, en undir bógum hestanna settu goðin tvá vindbelgi at kæla þá, en í sumum fræðum er þat kallat ísarnkol».

² “In the east sat the Old One in the Ironwood and gave birth to Fenrir’s children.”

³ “A giantess lives to the east of Miðgarðr in the forest which is called Járnvíðr.”

Skaði is called a Járnvíðja, and she is the daughter of the rime-thurs Þjazi, he who evoked the three terrible winters (*fimbulvotr*) that would be the beginning of Ragna Røk. Is this not an obvious “coincidence”, that the wrathful thurs who is one of the most dangerous antagonist to the ásir and the worlds, and who use winter and ice as weapons, is the father to a Ísarnvíðja? And as Skaði’s mother is not known, and that Járnvíðjur are said to be of the Old one in Járnvíðr, who might her mother be?

There might be a confusion about the location of the Ironwood; it’s easy to get the impression that it dwells somewhere in the upper Jötunheimr next to Miðgarðr. However, that is impossible as it is told that the Ironwood lies in the east of Miðgarðr, and only the underworlds lie there: a) *Völuspá* 40

«austr sat in aldna í Járnvíði ok fæddi þar Fenris kindir»², b) *Gylfaginning* 12 «Gýgr ein býr fyrir austan Miðgarð í þeim skógi, er Járnvíðr heitir»³ (please see my chart of the Heldrasill in the appendix). This proves that the Ironwood is located in the underworld.

GALGVIÐR AND GAGLVIÐR

In *Völuspá* 42 it is said:

Sat þar á haugi
ok sló hörpu
gýgjar hirðir,
glaðr Eggþér;
gól of hánun
í galgviði/gaglviði
fagrrauðr hani,
sá er Fjalarr heitir.

"He, the giantess' herder, the happy Eggþér, sat upon the heap and played on the harp; above him in *galgviðr* called a light red rooster, his name was Fjalarr."

This mysterious word *galgviðr/gaglviðr* has been thought by many as being an epithet for Járnsviðr, even by me, so I thought I would examine it; and here's my survey and thoughts on the subject.

Galgviðr, which only remains in *Hauksbók*, seems like an erroneous spelling of *gaglviðr*. Rydberg connects *galg-* with the Greek word *Χαλκός* (*khalkos*), copper, also (poetic) anything made of metal; which seems reasonable depending on how old the OI word *galgviðr* is. However, so far I have not seen any convincing evidence to support this. Although, if *galg-* derives from OI *gálgi*, the gallows, which it most likely does, it sheds a whole new light on *galgviðr*. If we look at some parts taken from *Sæmundar Edda*, just like the word *galgviðr*, it is much easier to see how *gálg-/galg-* would fit in. *Grógaldur* 9: «*ef þig fjáendr standa görvir á galgvegi*», "in case battle-ready foes meet you on the gallows-way", *Atlamál in grænlensku* 22 «*görvan hugða ek þér galga, gengir þú at hanga*», "I made you a gallows for you to hang in", and *Fjölsvinnsmál* 45 «*horskir hrafnar skulu þér á hám galga slíta sjónir ór*», "wise ravens shall on high gallows tear your eyes out." By this, *galgviðr* would mean "gallows tree", synonymous to the OI *gál-gatré* and *vargtré*, gallows-tree¹.

¹ Cleasby-Vigfusson, 1874, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*, and Heggstad, Hødnebo, Simensen, 2008, *Norrøn Ordbok*.

Óðinn is known to be analogous to the gallows-tree after *Hávamál* 138, *Ynglinga Saga* 7, etc., from where he got the epithets *Galga Farmr*, *Galga gramr*, *Galgavaldr*, *Hangatýr*, etc., all denoting "god/ruler of the gallows." Now why would Eggþér sit under a gallows-tree and Fjalarr on top of it crowing? Well, it does not have to be

too deep as an allegory, we already know the full myth about Fjalarr's intent to visit Eggþér, and it is to collect the magical sword Gambanteinn for Fjalarr's father Surtr, the sword that Eggþér guards and looks after as it is hidden deep within Járnviðr.¹ The kenning *gýgjar hirðir* refers both to Gullveig (the *gýgr*) and Eggþér (the *hirðir*). If we would to allegorize a tree in Járnviðr, a gallows tree would actually fit very well in a dark underworld forest full of malignant and hateful werewolves, troll and thurses. Not to forget, haugr in ON was also a grave, and since Eggþér, the herder of the giantess-witch who helped plan the men, gods, and worlds' downfall, sat under a gallows-tree on a haugr to protect the sword that will burn down the world, I would say that the author tried to add a deathly aspect to the *Völuspá* stanza 42.

¹ Loki explains this in *Lokasenna* 42: «Gulli keypta léztu Gýmis dóttur ok seldir þitt svá sverð; en er Múspells synir riða Myrkvið yfir, veizt-a þú þá, vesall, hvé þú vegr». Where Gýmis dóttur is Gerðr, the sword, *sverð*, is Gambanteinn, Myrkviðr is analogous to Járnviðr, and Múspells synir is referring to Fjalarr, in *Völuspá* 42, and his assumed company.

Gaglviðr, which is found in *Codex Regius*, means literally goose tree or wood, and considering the *Völuspá* stanza above which the word is taken from, goose has nothing to do with its contents, so it must mean something else. According to Egilsson's *Lexicon Poeticum* (1931) and Cleasby-Vigfusson's *An Icelandic-English Dictionary* (1874), the OE word *gagl* was typically used for various birds in poetry, e.g. *Gagl* is synonymous to raven as in *gagl ógnar*, "gosling of battle", and *Hrægagl*, *Nágagl*, *Blóðgagl*, and *Valgagl*, as well as puns like *Gagls leið*, the air, *Gaglfár*, enemy, and *Gaglhati*, enemy. These kinds of epithets remind me of Hel's birds, the ravens and (carrion-) crows connected to Gullveig. As a bird-epithet, this leaves me

with the hypothetical translation "bird tree" or "bird wood", and the sagas are full of these "witty" epithets as the ON poets loved to be clever – it was/is an art. As I understand it, the author simply chose a more poetic way of saying "tree", as the rooster sat up in it and crowed, he called it a "bird-tree" (as birds normally sit up in trees and sing in the woods).

Brate's Swedish translation of *gaglviðr* suggests that it would have to do with the plant Bog Myrtle, which is taken from the above mentioned book *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*. Kock's hypothesis is that *gagl* would come from the German word *gagel* (in Latin *Myrica Gale*), but in my opinion it's at the same time not too far-fetched, neither convincing.



kennings & Meanings

ANGRBOÐA

I believe *-boða* is the feminine form of the ON word *boði*, messenger or foreboder¹, derived from ON *buð*, which still remains in modern Swedish *bud*, message, to *båda*, bode as in forebode, which is the English form of ON *boði*, and in modern Icelandic *boða*. And *angr-* is without doubt the ON word *angr*, grief and woe. So the name *Angrboða* means “she the messenger of woe.”

¹ Reference; Cleasby-Vigfusson, 1874, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*, and Zoëga's *A Concise Dictionary of Old Icelandic*, see under *boði*.

AURBOÐA

Aur- has been most often taken as the ON word *aurr*, mud and wet sand; but I oppose the idea that it would stand for all words containing *aur-*. I believe it derives from the ON prefix *ør-*, which denoting a negative meaning as in English *un-*, and in Swedish *o-*. In a few sources *Aurboða* has even been written *Ørboða*: see *Teutonic Mythology* by Grimm, III, page 1149 where he quotes *Fjölsvinnsmál* 38, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary* by Cleasby and Vigfusson under *Ørboða* where it is said: “the name of a giantess, Hdl., *Edda*”, and *Lexicon Poeticum* 1860 under the word *Ørboða* (where she is called *uxor Gymeris*; *giganteæ originis*), etc. Indeed, the transition from *aur-* to *ør-* did occur; see for example under *aurgáti* in above mentioned *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*. *Ør-boða*, *Aurboða* would then mean something equivalent to her other name *Angrboða*: “she the bringer of bad tidings”, or simply “she the messenger of woe”.

HEIÐR

Heiðr means brightness and as a name of the giantess it is “she the bright one”, as in “the one who brings enlightenment.” The dictionary *An Icelandic-English Dictionary* says that the Old Icelandic word *heiðingi*, a heathen, could mean “a wolf” which probably derives from the ON word *heiðr* with the denotation “one who lives on

heaths and wildernesses." *Heiðr* was also a common synonym for a *völva*, an ON seeress or witch.

HYRROKIN

The denotation is "the flame smoked." The name is created from the Old Norse words *hyrr*, fire, and *rjúka*, smoke; an epithet being made after the three times Gullveig-Hyrrokin got held over a pyre by piercing spears and got flame smoked to death.

GULLVEIG

First of all I would like to dig into the minds of the people from Old Scandinavia and try to find out how they came up with the name, or rather the epithet, Gullveig (Gulveig, Gullweig, Gullveg). The name is clearly a made-up word in an Old Norse – at least north European – language. There are so many different explanations of this name, and not one is like the other, so here I will investigate this and hopefully I will find the true meaning of the beautiful carrier of so many hidden things.

¹ Wessén, 1968, *Svensk Språkhistoria*.

² Later the countries of Scandinavia developed their own runic languages which were developed through dialects of different parts of Scandinavia, as they still were pretty much the same sounding and looking.

³ Something tells me that they also used techniques like painting runes and magical figures on animal skin, bones, etc. (I'm thinking about the Swedish Samer which so carefully and understandingly have kept much of our Old heritage and traditions.) If you look into the religious history in the ancient times worldwide, this would be common and credible. But this is just my own speculation.

Until the Viking-age, people from Scandinavia were speaking *urnordiska* – ancient Nordic. *Urnordiska* was a runic language, and what we know of it was used approximately between the years of 300—700 AD. After that it started very slowly to show slight differences in the form of dialects in the countries and places of Scandinavia¹. It is safe to say that back in that time the Norsemen had pretty much the same language all over Scandinavia: the runic language². It is very important to look into this in the investigation of names in the mythology from that era, to be able to find traces of the ancient peoples' vocabularies and way of thinking. All the words which have survived from the ancient times in the Scandinavian languages do not always have the same meaning today.

The hard thing about *Urnordiska* is that the Old Nordic people only carved their runes in wood and softer natural materials³; some few occasions on stone-blocks (which were

rather a later cultus and custom) and in metallic items. This means that almost all evidence is lost, moldered away by natural causes. There's a big chance that Christianity, when it came to Scandinavia in the early medieval times, made sure to burn the rest of the remaining relics of antiquity of the Viking age Heathendom. This is why there is so little known about the runic language, runes and its usage. Almost all the evidence of witchcraft and magical use are lost, most of the hidden meanings and mysteries of the runes have gone astray, the same goes for the mythology. There is just a small percentage of surviving evidence left on a variety of materials e.g. stone-blocks, bracteates, amulets and some few simplified writings in books by non- and Scandinavian authors.

OLD AND MODERN SCANDINAVIAN WORDS ASSOCIATED WITH THE NAME GULLVEIG

Initially I will split up the name Gullveig and try to find *any* associations, connections or understandings concerning the meaning of her name. I will divide the name into two word-stems; *gul(1)*- and *-veig*.

The Icelandic has the noun *gull* which in modern Icelandic means “gold”, “treasure”; and “excellent person”, and a second noun, *gúll*, which in modern Icelandic means “outgrowth”, “unevenness”; and “mouth cavity”¹. There's also the Icelandic adjective *gulur* (*gul-ur*), which means yellow. There is another modern Icelandic word which has caught my attention and I would like to look into, *guluveiki*, also called *gula* and *gulusótt*² in Icelandic, which means jaundice³. It derives from the Icelandic words *gulur* (yellow) and *veiki* (disease). The

g-sound and the *k*-sound are related and not far from each other. This was common in the ancient runic language; for example: it was not odd to use the <-rune for both letters “*g*” and “*k*”. So concerning the word *guluveiki* I just want to look at it in a different way: If I split it up (*stem|case|stem|suffix*) *gul-u-veik-i*, the word already reminds me of the name *gullveig*. If I then presume that the *k* was originally a *g*, or supposedly the Old Norse people just thought of it as the same consonant, and then I also remove the case (*-u-*) and the suffix (*-i*) the word would look like this: *gulveig* (*gul-veig*). The word *guluveiki* and its association with the name *gullveig* is interesting for me because it is a disease – seen by the ancients as a seed of the devil, brought by demons, taught to witches: “I say that from the most potent poisons he (the demon) extracts a quintessence with which he infects the very spirit of life, and

¹ Gunnar Leijström and Jón Magnússon, 1943, *Isländsk-Svensk Ordbok*.

² “Gulsot” in Swedish.

³ Cleasby-Vigfusson, 1874, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*, and Heggstad, Hødnebo, Simensen, 2008, *Norrøn Ordbok*.

so establishes his devil-made disease that human skill is hardly able to find a remedy, since the devil's poison is too subtle and tenuous, too swift and sure in killing, and reaches to the very marrow of the bones."¹ Lilith is also known to be a wielder of diseases, illnesses and death, and in my opinion Gullveig and Lilith are strongly connected. The disease itself is just an allegory of the *danger* that the goddesses (and gods) could bring. As I have shown above Gullveig was known to spread a *disease*

upon mankind called *Fræ Aurboðu*, the destructive seed of Gullveig, as she is the carrier of the poison. As in many other traditions, Gullveig was the mother of all monsters, and these monsters were regarded as *bringers of sickness*, and sent sickness as poisonous arrows which struck men. It was known as Elf-shot, Hexenschuss, Alveskudt, Älvablåst, and Skott². We can compare this to *Forspjallsljóð* 13:

¹ Francesco Maria Guazzo, 1988, *Compendium Maleficarum*.

² Rooth, 1961, *Loki in Scandinavian Mythology*.

Eins kemr austan
úr Elivágum
þorn af akri
þurs hrímkalda,
hveim drepr dróttir
Dáinn allar
mæran of Miðgarð
með nátt hver.

It reads: "From the east out of Élivágar come rime-cold thurs arrows which kill the humans and destroy the land of Miðgarðr", which is to say that it was believed that the rime-thursian monsters, Gullveig's progeny, shot these fatal *arrows of sickness* (*skott*) at people. I also see a link to Loki and the Mistilteinn-myth here.

This might feel a bit farfetched, but with her attributes this assumption is not that strange.

*

In the Swedish lexicon *Svensk Etymologisk Ordbok* by Elof Hellquist (second edition 1939), under the word *Gullmaren* (Old Norse *goðmarr*, god-lake), it is explained that in the Scandinavian history of languages a transition was made from the letter *ð* to *l*, as in the assumed names *Gullbrand*; Old Swedish *Gulbrander* next to *Guðbrander*, and dialect *Gullmund* as *Gudmund*. In my studies of the Old Scan-

dinavian languages I have found that the transition *ð* to *l* took place during the medieval times. More examples of this transition are traced in the Runic Swedish word *gulli* which is considered to be an abbreviated form of *gudh-* which in English means god, and the same goes for the name *Gudhleif-Gullelf*. This proves that there was an actual transition from *goð-/guð-* (meaning god) to *gull-/gul-*, and that the *gull-* in the name *Gullveig* could be the Old Norse word *goð-/guð-*, and thereby giving a whole new meaning to her name.¹

I personally consider this theory as much more appropriate and truthful than the other ones, which to me seem like guesses and unexplored hypotheses. According to Cleasby-Vigfusson's dictionary of the Old Icelandic language, the Old Norse word *goð* was from the beginning a neuter which is to say that it had no gender, and it was almost exclusively used in plural, as in the ON word *regin*, (with very much the same denotation as *goð*) the powers, which might not have meant a plurality of gods but rather their power conjoined as in a "godhead".² The very old saga *Völuspá* 6 gives us a good example of how the word *goð* was used: «*pá gengu regin öll á rökstóla, ginnheilög goð*», "all powers went to their power-seats, the all-holy gods". However, on rare occasions *goð* was also used in singular and feminine form as in *Vanagoð* for *Freyja*. Thus as a hypothesis let's say *Gullveig* was a transition from *Goðveig*, and let's say that *goð-* was a plural neuter, this would mean that the name meant "the battle of the powers", powers as in the godly power, e.g. the Old Norse two-folded godly power: the *ásir* (heaven) and the *vanir* (earth). So was there any reason for the ON people to name *Gullveig* the *battle of the powers* or should I say named after a *battle of the powers*? I believe everything is explained in the *Völuspá* stanza 21:

¹ I have confirmed this theory with the *Institute of language and folklore* in *The Swedish Academy*, and they agreed with its authenticity.

² Cleasby-Vigfusson, 1874, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*.

She remembered the folk-war
the first in the world,
when *Gullveig*
they with spears pierced,
and in the hall of Óðinn
burned her,
thrice burned
and thrice born,
oft, not seldom,
yet she still lives.

The *folkvíg*-myth (folk-war) and the account on *Gullveig*'s executions are to be found in *Völuspá* and in Saxo's *Gesta Danorum* (*The History of the Danes*) which

complement each other. The *folkvíg*-myth is about the *vanir*, the lower god-power who considered Gullveig as an ally, and when the *ásir*, the higher god-power, killed Gullveig because of her *illr* witchcraft, when Óðinn himself used witchcraft at Rind's, the *vanir* became furious and acted with war as the *ásir* refused to compensate what they had unjustly done. This can be read in *Völuspá* 21-26. So this war between the two-folded god-power, *goð*, was because of Gullveig and her evil witchcraft, «*vólu velspá, vitti hon ganda; seið hon kyni, seið hon leikin, æ var hon angan illrar brúðar*» (*Codex Regius*).

It is evident to me that Gullveig is an epithet embodying this *folkvíg*-myth which her name suggests, and her name *Gullveig* is only mentioned once in the *Sæmundar Edda* all together and it is in the same stanza where it is explained about the war between the *vanir* and the *ásir*, i.e. the *folkvíg*. As you will see below –veig derives from the ancient Germanic *waizó*, power or strength, which is also connect to the ON word *víg*, battle, as in *folkvíg*.¹

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¹ Peterson, 2002, *Nordiskt runnamnslexikon*.

² How even this comparison was accepted amazes me, nobody would compare Lilith with Eve. This only shows, again, how ignorant people can be and how easily they just accept any hypothesis presented. To believe this comparison is to defile the giantess' name itself.

³ Palm, 2004, *Vikingarnas Språk*.

In the age of the Old Norse, Scandinavians had pretty much the same language. Equally, the literal transition from *ð* to *l* that I presented above was a pan-Nordic transition, not just a Swedish one. For example, in a grave found at Herjolfsnes (Herjolf's Point) in Greenland a piece of wood was found with Runic inscriptions: «*Þessi kona var lagð fyrir borð í Grænalands hafi, er Guðveig hét*», which reads in English "this woman, who was named Guðveig, was laid overboard in the Greenland ocean."

In Runic language we find that the noun *gull/goll* generally meant *gold*, and I'm pretty sure that the classic *An Icelandic-English Dictionary* (of Old Icelandic) by Cleasby and Vigfusson already gave people during the 1800s the idea that Gullveig meant "the one who loves gold; the one who drinks gold" or something similar; the gold-hypothesis was also triggered by the modern erroneous comparison between Gullveig and her contradictory goddess of light – *Freyja*². *Gull-* in the meaning *gold* has also been used in Nordic literature in kennings for a woman (*gulls selja*); "the one who wears gold or valuables."³

I don't get it, and I have never found an authentic source in the original sagas that says that Gullveig loved gold, something too many authors claim: Wägner claims that Gullweig means *gold-ore*¹, Grimm in his *Teutonic Mythology* talks about *Aurinia* and translates Gullveig to *gold-cup*², and Rydberg talks about the similarity between the name *Aurinia* and Gullveig's bi-name *Aurboða* in his work *Undersökningar I Germanisk Mythologi*: he points out that *aurum* is gold in Latin, which he thought could have a connection with Gullveig's name³. I am convinced that both Grimm and Rydberg got diverted by Cleasby and Vigfusson's *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*, as it says that Gullveig means "gold-drink" and "gold-thirst"; in Latin *auri fames*. Something they both overlooked (as well as Simek, amongst many others), was that *aurora* in Latin means, amongst other things, *east*. This, in my opinion, has a much bigger relevance because of Gullveig's abode in the eastern part of Jötunheimr; Járnvíðr. She even has the epithet "the giantess of the eastern storms." I have never come across any good reason for why Gullveig should have been connected to gold in the way people have shown so far. If the Old Nordic people named her after gold there must have been a good reason, and I just don't see it in the representations yet. Gullveig is connected to the moon, not the sun – gold has always corresponded to the sun in religions worldwide. She is not known for looking for wealth as in gold and she is often called *The Old One* in the *darkest woods of them all* – e.g. the black sphere of the moon, or the shadow side of the world; *the black earth* – Járnvíðr is located in the underworld.

¹ Wägner, 1917, *Asgard and the Gods*.

² Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*.

³ Rydberg, I 1886, II 1889, *Undersökningar I Germanisk Mythologi*.

She is thirsting everlastingly for victory and she is covetous and greedy, that wolf-like hunger and greediness could be allegorized as the *gold-thirst* that spread like the plague throughout the world. In the "Viking" society too of course; gold there was a very treacherous symbol and was offered to gods in sundry rituals, and the sagas tell us much of its usage in *blóthús*, *skurðgoð*, etc. Gold has also been looked upon as "evil" in many cultures, as well as the metal of "the sun-god". Indeed, what the gold-thirst did to people we all know, and if you don't know you can surely imagine; it drove (and still does) people insane, it drove people to fighting and killing each other – and it created wars. So if I use the Old Norse word *veig* with the meaning "a drink"; *gull-veig* could mean "gold drink" as in "gold thirst": it could be a possibility of an epithet for the way Gullveig's essence allured people's weak minds.

It is this that *only* convinces me why the Old Norse people would give Gullveig this name: she came as the ice-cold maid and seduced and allured men as well as women. A good testimony of this is allegorized in the *Edda's Völuspá* as it says:

She remembered the folk-war
 the first in the world,
 when Gullveig
 they with spears pierced,
 and in the hall of Óðinn
 burned her

And a few lines later it says about Gullveig-Heiðr:

Always was she loved by wicked women.

This is where I can easily see the connection between the war-creating gold-frenzy and Gullveig as the enchanting *völva* – her essence is irresistible and it will allure your *wrathful unnatural self*. Petersen noticed this in his rare and simple work¹,

in which he also points out that the *golden age* ended when the three horrible giantesses came out from Jötunheimr (see *Völuspá*) – if I'm right that those three giantesses are a metaphor for Gullveig, the gold-thirst theory seems weak.

¹ Petersen, 1869, *Nordisk Mytologi*.

However, I have another theory that is close to the gold-drink and gold-cup one. As I understand it, Grimm, Petersen and Rydberg amongst many others could have been right, but it seems like none of them understood the meaning of their own discovery. The name Gullveig might derive from such a metaphor, but with a much deeper significance. My theory has its basis in the meaning of *gull*- as golden colored water and in *-veig* as in cup or well. Giants have been connected with water throughout the sagas; they represent the extreme and phenomenal sides of nature, as in the stormy waves of the oceans, the huge uninhabited mountains, and the permanent glaciers, and wintry storms and lands. Even big waterfalls and roaring rivers are believed to represent giants, and many names of giants derive from uncontrolled and destructive waters such as those. Water is known to carry powers, and it has been used in most traditions through time in magical workings. Water could be seen as liquid power-flows. The earliest testimony of the creation of the cosmos in the ON mythology for example starts when the primordial ice of the world of rime Niflheimr melts because of the heat from the world of flames Múspellzheimr, and the sludgy waters stream out of the gaping chasm as an enormous icy river which was called Hvergelmir – the primordial well. Hvergelmir is the source of the ancient hidden knowledge of Chaos that the giants possess, and which the gods did not possess. This knowledge – gnosis – is a part of the giant-essence (*bursaafl*). And as I've acknowledged earlier Hvergelmir is ending with a "shore" called Élivágar which in its turn is divided into eleven rivers which are reaching out throughout the un-

derworld and are distributing its water all through the rest of the worlds – this is the origin of all oceans and waters. This allegorization is the axis of the giant race as a whole, evidently all giants came from this source; Ýmir, father of all thurses – *Ýmis-niðjar* – was an ice-giant, and Auðhumla, the cow, produced the jotuns by licking on salty icebergs. Ice here is a metaphor for sluggish water or dormant power which is waiting to be released. For me, the ice which melts and sets its water free in a violent flood is a very good metaphor for the sleeping powers of Chaos which gets woken by force by the disturbance of the creation of the cosmic powers. The sleeping powers of Chaos – the dormant ice – then awake and become at once wrathful – the ice melts and flood – the disturbances which awakes the Chaos-powers are the struggle by this new imposter called the demiurge – the creator of the cosmos. Thereby Chaos floods the cosmos with its wrathful powers to try to prevent the demiurge in succeeding with the creation of the cosmos – this opposition towards the cosmos is apparent in the ON Mythology in the giants' action towards the gods and humankind. Another important issue is that the acosmic powers of Chaos are too complex for the limited realm of the cosmos, so Chaos' manifestations always become deformed, unnatural and lawless. With this Gnostic view upon the creation, the ice- and water-metaphor and the deformed exterior of the giants make good sense, in comparison to other mythologies. So the storming waves of Hvergelmir are in fact the wrathful powers storming out of the Jaws of Chaos: *Gap Ginnunga*. By my understanding of the nexus between the *storming waves* of water and the *wrathful* giants (thurses) the giants' essence is mythological interlinked with the wild ocean, the alarming and foaming waterfalls, and the violent and destructive rivers; this and all other violent, harsh and destructive nature-forces. Indeed, as water is a representation of sources of power, especially well-water which is known to carry the underworldly powers, this element fits well as an aspect of the giant-essence.

In this aspect I want to bring up Aurgelmir-Ýmir first as he was the proto-giant and the foundation of its races (*áttar*); his first named and known son and grandson Þrúðgelmir and Bergelmir. Ýmir is his most known name which is supposed to be derived from Sanskrit *Yama*; Latin *geminus*; and the Indo-Germanic root *iemo*- "twin, hermaphrodite"¹, and this conclusion is of course made out of his hermaphroditic fathering of the two mysterious thurses by his left hand and the deformed thurs Þrúðgelmir from his feet. However, it is his second name Aurgelmir that is more of interest in this subject; this name is explained to be his name amongst the rime-thurses (the ones with the deep and ancient knowledge). *Aur*- derives from the ON word *aurr*, wet clay or loam², even

¹ Simek, 2007, *Dictionary of Northern Mythology*.

² Cleasby-Vigfusson, 1874, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*, and Heggstad, Hødnebo, Simensen, 2008, *Norrøn Ordbok*.

sand¹. This refers to the slaughter of Aurgelmir-Ýmir when e.g. his flesh was used to make the earth (Ýmishold) and his blood to make the oceans (Ýmisblóð). In *Fjölsvinnsmál* Aurgelmir gets the epithet *Leirbrimir*²; *leir*-, mud³, and *brim*, surf or the ocean by the poets⁴: “muddy waters”, which is unmistakably an epithet he re-

¹ Palm, 2004, *Vikingarnas Språk*.

² “Leirbrimis limum”.

³ Cleasby-Vigfusson, 1874, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*, Heggstad, Hødnebo, Simensen, 2008, *Norrøn Ordbok*, and Helquist, 1939, *Svensk Etymologisk Ordbok*.

⁴ Palm, 2004, *Vikingarnas Språk*, Heggstad, Hødnebo, Simensen, 2008, *Norrøn Ordbok*, and Cleasby-Vigfusson, 1874, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*.

cieved from the mythos where he got slaughtered and his flesh became “mud or wet clay” as in the earth’s crust, and his blood the oceans. Furthermore, *-gelmir* means roaring, and this “roaring” is speculated to symbolize the roaring of waves; as in stormy waters. So the name Aurgelmir becomes somewhat of an epithet for maybe a stormy sea-shore, or a violent flood; “a storming muddy flood”, which makes me think of water that comes rushing down as a flood from the mountains after a cruel rainstorm or a melting snow-cap. This – plus the fact that he is a rime-giant made of ice/water – gives the proto-giant Ýmir-Aurgelmir a role as the origin of the waters and oceans – pretty much like how I allegorized the wrathful Chaos-power which came storming out of *Gap Ginnunga*. Aurgelmir’s first named son is Þrúðgelmir which means the powerful roaring, which in

this context would mean a “powerful roaring flood” or “powerfully roaring waves.” Þrúðgelmir is said to have numerous heads, which here would symbolize several mouths of a river. This is a very fitting metaphor of Élivágar which is explained as being an end or a shore of a fierce river with eleven mouths – this type of aggressive power-flow is allegorized in other traditions as e.g. a black dragon with manifold heads: as the *Bringer of the Wrathful Current*. So the still remaining essence of Aurgelmir could be represented by Hvergelmir – the vast power-well of “poisonous water”, and out from it Élivágar as a wrathful storming flood is deluging with black icy waters – manifested as the multi-headed rime-giant Þrúðgelmir. By this I’m not saying that this is the actual fact, I’m merely exploring their icy, watery and stormy nexus. Now, Þrúðgelmir’s son is Bergelmir, and his name is supposedly derived from the ON word *berg*, mountain. I’m not convinced, even though it’s not an unlikely epithet, but if you instead look at the ON word *berja*, to strike, beat, smite (at times as a punishment), it seems more fitting. *Berja* is used in violent situations, and I believe *ber-* in Bergelmir is taken from the word *berja* in the present tense *berr*, strikes, beats, smites. In this sense Bergelmir would mean the striking and roaring one. This could easily be a metaphor for the violent mountain-rivers or waterfalls which beat and crush everything in their way.

After I have made clear that the three first and most important thurses are somehow connected to or symbolizing vehement waters or waves, we can now move on

to other giants; thurses and jotuns. Petersen¹ put emphasis on Mímir, guardian of the well of wisdom (one of three underworldly wells). First off, Mímir is said to be the keeper of the water of all ancient and hidden wisdom; this alone shows his connection to water and primordial power. Mímir is from the

benign jotun race (*ætt*) from Auðhumla². Petersen also claims that Mímir's well (*Mímisbrunnr*) is the origin of the oceans, the ocean being the origin of all life. Well, I have to disagree with that; only if he means that *Mímisbrunnr* and *Hvergelmir* are the same would this be true – but they are not the same. There are three underworldly wells, according to my investigations: 1) *Mímisbrunnr* (located in the North of the underworld), 2) *Urðarbrunnr* (located in the South of the underworld), and 3) *Hvergelmir* (located in the east beyond the underworld). This would mean that Mímir, Urðr, and the ruler of *Hvergelmir* are all connected to the water and the primordial current.

¹ Petersen, 1869, *Nordisk Mytologi*.

² According to Snorri's *Gylfaginning*.

A very predictable happening coming from Snorri in his *Gylfaginning* 5-8, but still interesting, is the saga when Óðinn and his two brothers (Vili and Vé) slaughtered Ymir and used his limbs and blood to create the world: his blood became the ocean. There was so much blood in Ymir's huge body, as he was huge even to the giants, it was said, that when the blood gushed out of Ymir's wounds it drowned all rime-giants but the rime-giant called Bergelmir. So according to *Gylfaginning*, Bergelmir rose from the "ocean" and thereby became a symbol of the rime-giant's race springing from the water. I feel confident enough to say that this is what Snorri had in mind when he presented such a geographic allegory – *All life spring from water*.

We have the mysterious Hrímgærd who is explained in *Helgakviða Hjörvarðssonar* to be a water-giantess, connected with Rán but not the same. Hrímgærd's mother seems to be a monster from the depths, and the saga does not reveal her, which is too bad. The prefix *hrím-* in her name is a suggestion of her heritage, and this would be that she belongs to the icy realms in Niflheimr. Her name means *Gerðr of rime* and could be connected to Gullveig's daughter Gerðr and Gullveig's icy blood.

After all that has been said and proved, we have to see by now that Gullveig clearly has her origins in the water; she's explained to be a giantess of ice, and she is the spouse to the ocean-giant Ægir-Gýmir, as she is called "Gýmir's primevally cold witch bears ships amongst storming waves in the jaws of Ægir." (Gýmir is the parent of Gerðr, so is Gullveig, and Ægir is explained to be the same as Gýmir.) Here Gullveig is allegorized as the eastern ocean-storms – her spouse is the ocean and she is

the storm which makes its waves untamed. Here we can find very interesting connections, first off Ægir's most known wife is Rán, and Rán is the ocean-giantess who is the mother of Ægir's nine daughters; the ocean's stormy waves. Now Gullveig is also allegorized as the "mother" of the stormy waves in the line "Gýmir's primevally cold witch bears ships amongst storming waves in the jaws of Ægir", this gives Rán and Gullveig the same character and attributes. Also, Rán is only mentioned as a death-giantess; in the sagas she is idiomatically connected to the saying "falling into the hands of Rán", as in drowning in the sea. This gives her the role as a death-giantess in the depths of the ocean's abyss where she rules over the dead. This can be reflected in Gullveig's daughter Hel, the queen-ruler of the underworldly realm of the dead. I must say that the connection between the alliance of storm, wave, and ocean -Gullveig and Rán, Gullveig and Hel- is unique. The fact that Gýmir's name most likely derives from Ýmir and that Gullveig might be the first rimethurs Ýmir created, makes indeed the connection between stormy ocean-Ýmir-Gýmir-Gullveig as unique.

Another theory could be that it was believed that Gullveig's power was representing the golden water that you find in Scandinavian lakes and rivers – it was known that all waters in the world came from the wells of wisdom (e.g. Mímisbrunnr, Urðarbrunnr and Hvergelmir), and that the golden color could easily have been looked upon as a water colored by its richness: richness as in primordial wisdom – biologically this is true as well. With this lore the waters in *wells* would be even more sacred than of those of lakes and rivers. Naturally made wells were actually looked upon as filled with magical powers – pure waters which came up directly from the underworld. Such wells are common in Scandinavian woods and are even saved in a few villages to this day – in folklore they have always carried strong magical powers. They are called sacrificial wells or wishing wells, you sacrifice into it to receive a gift in return. This all derives from the belief of spiritual powers of the underworld or *within* the earth that would empower this holy water that poured up from the mighty wells under the roots of Yggdrasil.

Scientifically, in many lakes and rivers in e.g. northern Europe the water has a yellowish and brownish color which is a result of dissolved organic carbon (DOC). This could be one argument for the *gull*- usage in the name of Gullveig.

With this said; I am convinced that authors through time have been too lazy to even bother to research her name properly and just taken for granted that Gullveig meant "the one who loves gold" – especially if you understand all meanings of the ON word *veig*.



A sacrificial well from the Viking-age. Photography by the author.

Let's take a look at the suffix *-veig* in the name Gullveig. The suffix *-veig* is very common in Norse women's names and it has not been a riddle to understand its etymological meaning, but we know that it derives from the ancient Germanic word *waizó*, power or strength.¹ The primary theory amongst experts is that it originates from the Old Norse suffix *-vig* of the Old Norse noun *víg*; which means battle.² *Víg* has survived in modern Icelandic with the same meaning.

¹ Peterson, 2002, *Nordiskt runnamnslexikon*.

² See Palm, 2004, *Vikingarnas Språk*, and Peterson, 2002, *Nordiskt runnamnslexikon*. Also under *vig* in Dahlgren, 1914-16, *Glossarium öfver Föräldrade eller Ovanliga Ord och Talesätt i Svenska Språket*.

A secondary *-veig* theory is that it derives from the Old Norse word *vé* which means "a sacred place" or "a sacrificial place."

We have the noun *veig* in modern Icelandic which means wine, which derives from the Old Icelandic and Old Norse word *vieg*, which means "a drink" – this meaning is used in Gullveig's name as the "gold drink." The modern Icelandic word *veigur* –

which drives from the same Old Icelandic word above *veig* with the secondary meaning of pith, strength, and gist – is much more interesting, as it means power, strength and solidity, which makes me interested and I defiantly see a connection. I would say that is not a very bold guess to affirm that *veig* – *veigur* derives from the Old Norse word *víg*.

To conclude this survey I would say that I think I have proven that the name Gullveig actually means “the battle of the powers” or something similar, and derives from the *folkvíg*-myth.

SUMMARY

I. The ON word *gull* in the name Gullveig is most likely a literal transition from the ON word *god*, god – and not the ON word for gold.

II. The ON word *veig* in the name Gullveig most likely derives from the ON word *víg*, battle.

III. In conclusion and by all evidence I have hereby presented, I consider that the name Gullveig is based on the *folkvíg*-myth found in *Völuspá*, in which Gullveig was allegorized as the trigger of the war between the gods; and thereby was called the “divinity/provoker of war”.



Gullveig & Loki

Ól ulf Loki við Angrboðu...

Loki át hjarta lindi brenndu,
fann hann halfsviðinn hugstein konu;
varð Loftr kviðugr af konu illri;
þaðan er á foldu flagð hvert komit.
– *Völuspá in skamma*

The abyss yawned immensely, as eleven black projections reached out of the absolute darkness, uncontrolled and beyond measure the energetic limbs entangled the emptiness of the nothingness. They were to be called poisonous serpents – bale powers extruding from the abyss. All of these powers had an essence with a purpose and they took form – elemental and deformed. Darkness spawned darkness, and its light was black. One of the black serpents carried The Flare – The One who was two – he was born in the image of his originator; and as inferno in essence, attributes and manifestations he came, horrible and giant, out of the primordial world and of the oldest of slumbering entities. Through the flames he was brought, and of the flames he became – bringing the heart of the powers unknown to unleash Hel upon whatever that would be called life. He unleashed the ever-hungry iron-night with a blood-stained veil upon the unborn seed of the creation. He brought from the abyss the omnipotent scepter: his ever-evolving axis, which would run through the coming egg. He was perceived as the core of fire, something that only lightening could become in the moment of strike, or the blinding horns of the sun, or the infernal tongue of the raging volcano. The lightening is his arm reaching out of the underworld as he grasps whatever his cunning plans have hunted down. He is wrath, seen as wildfire driven by the eastern winds – devouring, burning and corroding eyes and lungs; suffocating from all angles as a heavy black smoke. He is called Loki, *Keeper of Keys – The Dissolver – Gullveig's Companion.*

As a thurs spawned out of the Múspell-fires, Loki is the perfect illustration of an ally to Surtr. His essence in the sagas being like extreme heat; it pierces through anything. Unstoppable, Loki runs through all cosmic entities with his heat as if the world tree itself were aflame (with *eitr*) and dissolves them from inside. The cosmic

illusions are like a temple made out of glass for Loki, he sees right through it and with sundry strategic strikes from his part it will fall into pieces and remain unrepairable.

The complex essence of Loki is extremely hard to divulge, amongst many names and epithets he is known as *inn lævísi Loki*, "the cunning Loki"¹, and *Geðreynir*, which means something like "challenger of the mind or patience." In Loki's true essence he is a thurs giant which various episodes in the ON sagas testify to:

1) In *Völuspá in skamma* 11 it says "Loki bore a wolf to Angrboða, and Sleipnir to Svaðilfari; amongst all a witch who seemed the worst, she was begotten from Býleistr's brother." This stanza explains many things about Loki's giant-descent, he gave birth to the giant wolf Fenrir, 'the wolf', and according to *Gylfaginning* he transformed himself into a mare and bore the eight-legged horse Sleipnir, and *only* giants have the traits of deformity and *inborn* supernatural powers (as in eight legs on a horse). The 'witch who seemed the worst' is the thursian giantess of Niflheimr Hel, she is said to be begotten from Býleistr's brother whom we know is Loki, and as Býleistr is most likely a giant, his brother, Loki, must be one too. Note that Býleistr's name, "eastern storm", and Loki's epithet *Loptr*, air, are connected.

2) In *Völuspá* 47 it is said that, "the tall Ash Yggdrasil trembles, the old tree wails when the giant comes loose." Considering the big drama the sagas have presented of the capturing of Loki and his imprisonment, I think it is safe to say this part is referring to him – Loki the giant. To support this Gullveig says in *Baldur's Draumar* 14, "Loki will be free of his fetters and all Ragnarokian destroyers will come."

3) In *Völuspá* 51 it says "the ship fares from the east, the Múspell-folk shall come over the sea, and Loki steers; the monsters come with the wolf, with them comes Býleistr's brother." Here it explains how the thursian powers, mixed races, are coming with the Naglfar-ship over the poisonous Élivágar waters from the east as Ragna Røk has begun. An important detail is mentioned here: *only* Loki and Býleistr are named amongst these ragnarokian thurses, (why Loki's other

¹ In *Grógaldur* a mysterious threatening witch is called *hin lævísa kona*, this epithet is a feminine version of the Loki one. The Old Icelandic word *lævíss* means often crafty or cunning in an evil sense (skilful in finding out how to bring harm upon others, says Bugge), as in the Old Icelandic word *læ*, bane, and the saying *blanda lopt lævi*, "to poison the air", and Loki is called both *Loptr* and *Lævíss* which is very interesting in this context. This saying can be traced to *Völuspá* 25: «Þá gengu regin öll á rökstóla, ginnheilög goð, ok um þat gæt-tusk, hverjir hefði loft allt lævi blandit eða ætt jötuns Óðs mey gefna», which refers to the story, found in *Gylfaginning*, when the *æsir* on Loki's advise and guidance lets a giant build Ásgarðr in trade for Freyja, Óðs mey, and the *æsir* understood that Loki wanted the *æsir* to lose the bet and Freyja, and thereby Loki is the one who *loft allt lævi blandit*.

¹ Bugge theorizes: "Loki was thought of as the demon of fire... We have, however, further evidence that Loki was regarded as the demon of fire in several expressions in use among the Scandinavian peasantry. In Iceland *Loka spænr* was formerly used as 'shavings to light fires with,' and *Lokabrenna* is a name of the dog-star. In Telemark, Norway, the common people say, 'Lokje is striking his children,' when there is loud crackling in burning trees. This conception of Loki as the demon of fire is based on the words of St. Luke: 'I beheld Satan as lightning falling from heaven,' and on the belief of Christian theologians, that the body of the demon consists of fire and air. In the Cornish drama, 'The Creation of the World,' Lucifer says: 'I am the lanthorn of heaven, certainly, like a fire shining.' Loki is also called *Lopttr*, i.e. 'air.'" – 1899, *The Home of the Eddic Poems with Especial Reference to the Helgi-Lays*.

Cleasby-Vigfusson's *An Icelandic-English Dictionary* from 1874 explains this about Loki's derivation from a fiery origin: "Loki, the name of the terrible fire-demon, half god, half giant, the friend and companion of the gods, and yet their most fearful foe. We have a new suggestion to make as to the origin of this name. The old Northern Loki and the old Italic *Volcanus* are, we believe, identical; as thus, – the old Teutonic form of Loki, we suppose, was *Wloka*, whence, by dropping the *w* before *l*, according to the rules of the Scandinavian tongue, *Loki*. A complete analogy is presented in Lat. *voltus*, *vultus*, A.S. *wlits*, but Icel. *lit* (in and -lit, a face); and, in point of the character of the two demons, the resemblance is no less striking, as we have on the one hand *Vulcanus* with Etna for his workshop (cp. the mod. volcano), and on the other hand the Northern legends of the fettered fire-giant, *Loki*, by whose struggles the earthquakes are caused. Of all the personages of the Northern heathen religion, the three, Óðinn, Þórr, and *Loki*, were by far the most prominent; but not even the name of *Loki* is preserved in the records of any other Teutonic people. Can the words of Caesar B.G. vi, x. xi, Solem 'Vulcanum' et Lunam. refer to our *Loki*? Probably not, although in Caesar's time the form would have been *Wlokan* in acc., a form which a Roman ear might well have identified with their own *Vulcanus*. The old derivation from *loka*, to shut, is inadmissible in the present state of philological science: a *Wōdan* from *vaða*, or *Loki* from *loka*, is no better than a 'Juno a juvando,' or a 'Neptunus a nando.' May not *Loki* (*Wloka*) be a relation to the Sansk. *vrika*, Slav. *vluku*, Lith. *vilkas*, Icel. *vargr*, *úlfr*, meaning a destroyer, a wolf? It is very significant that in the Norse mythology *Loki* is the father of the world-destroying monsters, – the wolf *Fenrir*, the World-serpent, and the ogress *Hel*; and, if the etymology suggested be true, he was himself originally represented as a wolf."

And on Iceland *Loki* was connected to Volcanoes, like *Surtr*, which connects them to both; as a result of this the smell of sulfur was called on Iceland *Lokadaun*. And the Old Icelandic had *Lokabrenna* (the blazing of *Loki*) as a synonym to fire.

"brother" *Helblindi* is not mentioned here has an obvious explanation to me, which is that he is not a thurs nor a giant, but the áss Óðinn), which only means that the author wanted to emphasize their involvement in the Ragna Rök mythos; which in its turn proves that they are both thursian giants. *Gylfaginning* complements this with the words "Loki and Hrymr shall come there also, and with him all the rime-giants. All the champions of Hel follow *Loki*." Neither, rime-giants nor Múspell-sons would follow an áss, which proves again that *Loki* is a thurs.

4) *Gylfaginning* also explains that "Loki shall have battle with *Heimdallr*" and *Loki* kills him. *Loki* evidently fought on the thurses side and killed an áss-god; this line itself proves his descent.

5) To conclude this list I believe we all can agree that in most of the sagas that involve *Loki* he unyieldingly tries to trick, mislead and give the *ásir* away to the giants – which includes theft, lies, abduction, and murder – which could only be seen as an antagonistic, adverse, and evil trait.

Loki is also known as a fire giant¹: «*Sá er nefndur Loki eða Lof-tur, sonur Fárbauta jötuns*», "His

name is Loki, also Loftur (Loptr), son of the giant Fárbaumi" and Loki bore Gullveig's children: «*varð Loftr kviðugr af konu illri*» "Loftr (Loptr) got pregnant by an evil woman" – («*þaðan er á foldu flagð hvert komit*», "from this all monsters derived", which means that according to this Loki and Gullveig are the ancestors of all monsters and troll in the ON mythology.) Loki is also called *ulfs föður*, "the wolf's father". He is also considered an áss-god, for a certain amount of time, with many conflicting qualities, *Gylfaginning* says:

Among the Ásir is he whom some call the slanderer of the Ásir, the originator of falsehood, and blemish of all gods and men: he is named Loki or Loptr, son of Fárbaumi the giant; his mother was Laufey or Nál; his brothers are Býleistr and Helblindi. Loki is beautiful and fair to look upon, evil in spirit, very false in habit. He surpassed other men in that wisdom which is called cunning, and had crafts for all occasions; he would ever bring the Ásir into great hardships, and then get them out with crafty counsel. His wife was called Sigyn, their son Nari or Narfi. Yet more children had Loki. Angrboða was the name of a certain giantess in Jötunheimr, with whom Loki begat three children: one was Fenrir, the second Jörmungandr, which is the Serpent of Midgard, the third is Hel.

As his parents are giants, why call him áss? The father is called the bale striker¹, and his mother's name is Laufey which has been commonly translated into a "leafy isle"; supposedly being a metaphor for the crown of a tree. Here we have to re-

¹ Fárbaumi whom I believe is the same as Surtr.

member that the giants' names and epithets were not made up at the time when the *Eddas* were written down, the names are very old and have been saved through generations of oral tradition. The names are hundreds of years older than the dates of the *Eddas*; some names might even be remnants from times before the Common Era. This is something I have noticed that has been overlooked too often. For me, Laufey does not necessarily have to mean a leafy isle, though I agree that it is very fitting and logical that Fárbaumi is an allegorization for the lightening and Laufey is a "tree isle" – the tree crown, and by Fárbaumi to strike it which sets it aflame and by that creating Loki. However, I am still uncertain of this translation, so I like to bring up the hero called Bjǫðvar Bjarki in *Landnámabók* who owns a sword called Laufi, this leaves me with the gut-feeling that *lauf-* had another meaning back in the age of the runes. If *lauf* or *laufi* once was an epithet or a synonym for a sword the name Laufey on Loki's mother would make much sense as Loki is "the sword's father"; as he created the vindictive sword called Gambanteinn – another name for Lævateinn – Hævateinn – as it is said in *Fjölsvinnsmál*:

Lævateinn hann heitir,
 en hann gerði Loptr rýninn
 fyr nágrindr neðan;
 í seigjárnkeri
 liggr hann hjá Sinmöru,
 ok halda njarðlásar nú.

Snorri's *Nafnaþulur* actually confirms that *laufi* is a kenning for a sword; which in turn confirms my finding. Concerning the stanza quoted above, it says that Loki created the sword Lævateinn-Gambanteinn, and in Snorri's list of mythological epithets he mentions *Úlfr*, wolf, as one amongst many wolf-related epithets for a sword (*Nafnaþulur* 43). Furthermore, Loki is called *ulfs fœður*, "the wolf's father", (Loki is also called *faðir morna*, "the sword's father"), and this epithet has been taken for granted to be a name after his wolf-child Fenrir, but as it also could intend the sword Gambanteinn I think we should think again – considering his epithet *faðir morna*. The same list mentions *Níðhöggr* (48) and *Naglfari* (47) as epithets for a mythological sword, this is very interesting and could give the Ragna Rök mythos a whole new perspective. *Níðhöggr*, the one who strikes with scorn, is a very good epithet for a sword, especially the sword Gambanteinn. Now, I do not exclude that *Níðhöggr* is a Chaos-dragon dwelling in the depths of Hvergelmir, I am just speculating on different aspects of the sagas. This rich list, *Nafnaþulur*, also mentions many names that mean fire or flame, which reminds me very much of the flaming sword given to or made for Surtr: Gambanteinn.

¹ The ON word *hrímkálki* is only used three times in the *Edda*; two times in *Lokasenna* and one time in *Skírnismál* 37 where Gerðr, daughter of Aurboða-Gullveig, offers Skírnir a *hrímkálki* with yearlong mead, but he rides home instead of taking it; compared to *Lokasenna* 53 where Loki takes the *hrímkálki* and drinks of it: in both cases the "rime-chalice" belongs to the (rime-) giants.

Something very strange is that Loki is also connected to the rime-thurses in a paradoxal way, which we can trace in these lines from *Lokasenna*:

þá gekk Sif fram ok byrлаði Loka í hrímkálki mjöð ok mælti:
 Heill ver þú nú, Loki,
 ok tak við hrímkálki
 fullum forns mjaðar...

Then Sif walked up to Loki and poured mead in a rime-chalice,
 and she spoke:
 Hail to you, Loki,
 take this rime-chalice
 full of yearlong mead...

Hrím- is only connected with rime-thurses in the ON mythology, and Loki is the only one in *Lokasenna* who gets served mead in *hrímkálki*, a rime-chalice¹. This is

evidently a way for the author to connect him with the rime-thurses, *hrímkálki* for a *hrímpurs*; which reminds me of *Gylfaginning* where it is said: “Loki and Hrymr shall come there also, and with him all the rime-giants.” Indeed, the rime-thursian prefix *hrím-* is used once more in *Lokasenna* 49:

Létt er þér, Loki;
mun-at-tu lengi svá
leika lausum hala,
því at þik á hjörvi
skulu ins hrímkalda magar
görnum binda goð.

For Brate and many others it is just taken for granted that this stanza says that Loki will be bound by “his own son’s rime-cold bowels,” but it says nothing about his son in this stanza, it is Snorri in his later *Edda* who says that it is his son’s bowels¹. Here it just says that Loki will be bound with *hrímkalda* bowels, they could be his own or a metaphor for magical chains of rime-thursian strength. It is also commonly assumed that the stanza says that Loki will be put on sharp rocks, when it actually says on a sword: *hjör*², sword. For me, *Hjör* here being hypothetically an allegory for sharp rocks is actually misplaced and misleading. In *Lokasenna* it is said that Loki shall lie on a *hjör*, a sword, and in *Gylfaginning* it is said that he shall lie on three *eggsteinar* (*þrjá eggsteina*): *eggsteinn*, an edge or a sharp stone³.

¹ «Brugðu æsir Vála í vargs líki og reif hann í sundur Narfa, bróður sinn. Þá tóku æsir þarma hans og bundu Loka með...»

² Cleasby-Vigfusson, 1874, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*. Zoëga, 1910, *A Concise Dictionary of Old Icelandic*. Egilsson, 1931, *Lexicon Poeticum*, and Heggstad, Hødnebo, Simensen, 2008, *Norrøn Ordbok*.

³ Cleasby-Vigfusson, 1874, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*.

⁴ *Fjølsvinnsmál*.

But in *Nafnapulur*, *Snorra Edda*, under epithets for swords we find *Eggsteinar* (49). This shows that *eggsteinar* are no rocks, they are three swords. This connects Loki even more with the sword-mythos.

Loki is the son of the hurricane- and thunder-giant *Fárbauti*, “the bale striker”; whom I believe is the same as *Surtr*, supreme ruler of *Múspellzheimr*. This could mean that Loki is *Surtr*’s burning sword that he plans to thrust the demiurge and the creation’s heart with. Indeed, as Loki is said to be the creator of *Gambanteinn*⁴, *Surtr*’s sword of vengeance, pieces start to fall in place, at least for me, and I start to see the connection more clearly. *Gambanteinn* is mostly likely an aspect of Loki as he is always involved in the myths and developments of this sword. Loki made this sword out of the flames of *Múspell* and with the incinerating thursian runes of his father, and it is analogous with *Mistilteinn* and lays as ground for the *fjölkyngi*-weapon he killed *Baldr* with.

I will not go further into the Gambanteinn-myth here as it is too much of a big work and it does not belong in this book of Gullveig, but I will investigate this extremely important Gambanteinn-myth elsewhere.

Now, back to Gullveig and Loki's relation, the most classic evidence for their alliance is found in some lines from *Völuspá in skamma* 11, 12:

Loki begat the wolf
with Angrboða

...

Loki ate a heart
burnt upon the embers,
he found the half-singed
heart of a woman.

Loptr was expectant with child
of that wicked woman;
and from this
all monsters derived.

The wolf is Fenrir, and Angrboða is, as you know by now, Gullveig; Loptr is another name for Loki which means "the one aloft" and the wicked woman is Gullveig. Then we have the classic part from *Gylfaginning* 34:

Yet more children had Loki. Angrboða was the name of a certain giantess in Jötunheimr, with whom Loki gat three children: one was Fenrir, the second Jörmungandr, which is the Serpent of Midgard, the third is Hel.

These two examples are the foundation of Gullveig and Loki's relationship and then many sagas with themselves individually elaborate their companionship and unconquerable purposes. Like Niflheimr and Múspellzheimr they came out of nothingness, one was created from rime and one from flames, Gullveig and Loki came as a two-fold fiend to counteract and antagonize the creation and its demiurge. Both came storming out of Útgarðr, *Logi* and *Úrsvöl*, to dissolve from all ends – fire and ice striking from each side. Two heroes who sacrifice themselves fearlessly – warriors and rulers: *liberators* and *avengers*.

In addition, I want to add another strong piece of evidence of their relations, Loki's epithet *farmr arma galdrs hapt* in *Þórsdrápa*; *farmr arma*, "the arm-burden", which means spouse, and *galdrs hapt*, "the deity of sorcery". *farmr arma galdrs hapt* for me refers to Gullveig as she is known in the ON mythology as the sorcerous spouse to Loki.

The ON sagas tell us how this two-fold concurrent power – dynamic and destructive – Gullveig and Loki came out of Chaos, took form, penetrated the cosmos as alien and unknown powers, and infiltrated the worlds undetected and actually got recognized as gods; Loki got called áss and Gullveig was assumed to come from the race of the vanir, as far as the surviving myth-fragments go. If two thursian giants were able to transform even in essence so that the wisest of the gods could not recognize them as invaders from the antagonistic races of *hrímpursar* and *múspells synir*, they must have been superior to all the powers within the cosmic worlds. Indeed, like Gullveig, Loki was a unique shape-shifter; they both knew the rare art of transforming both in manifestation *and* essence. They were also very sharp observers of others character, and used it quick-wittedly to others' disadvantage. In that, Loki misled and tricked everybody and made a fool out of them. Furthermore, when it comes to Loki's sly plans, he was always long ahead, and he always formed them so that the most maleficent plans seemed to be the most beneficent and favourable. Wits, viciousness and bottomless spitefulness are coalesced in the essence of Loki, something he shares with Gullveig – also the demonized thursian aspect that brings evil and vexation, mockery and frustration amongst the gods and goddesses, and to the humans in Miðgarðr as well. Even if Loki mostly is looked upon as a jester-like troublemaker on the surface he plants devastating seeds in the ignorant souls of the *ásir* without them seeing it, and thereby reveals his superior intelligence. Even Óðinn, the so-called “all seeing one”, gets profoundly deceived from day one by his mysterious blood-brother Loki. As the father and mother of Jörmungandr, Fenrir, and Hel, Loki and Gullveig represent the true embodiment of all that underlies the very essence of all the Ragna Røk forces: the emanations and current of an anti-cosmic Chaos – seen from a Chaos-Gnostic perspective of course.

However, even if the sagas clearly illustrate them both as a couple and allies, it is not once told that they ever lived together. This is a mystery that follows every giant and giantess in the underworld in the sagas. For me, it is an unsolved mystery, and it haunts my mind. I believe the only reasonable motive for this is that the giants are representations of the wild, forceful, adverse, and alienated powers; and thereby they cannot submit to *causality*. I believe Gullveig and Loki could be the absolute representations of the feminine and masculine acausal power ascending from Niflheimr and Múspellzheimr.

Another mystery amongst the giants is their siblings, most often there are only names but no further details. However, a good thing is that the names are often epithets. Epithet is explained by an English dictionary as “a characterizing word or phrase firmly associated with a person or thing and often used in place of an actual

name." The ON epithets often explained characters' actions in the old sagas, which in turn helps you with identifying the characters. E.g. Loki is called *Litr*, salmon, as he twice (that we know of) transformed himself into a salmon in the sagas, and Gullveig is called *Hyrrokin*, flame-smoked, as she got burned thrice by the *ásir*. Now, Loki has two brothers, one is called *Helblindi*, and ON *blindr* normally means blind, but could on rare occasions mean dark or hidden, and I think his name has just that denotation; the exact meaning of *Helblindi* is very hard to figure out but "the one blinded from Hel or the one who shuns death" are, for me, two possible translations. *Helblindi* is never mentioned in the *Sæmundar Edda*, but in *Gylfaginning* is he mentioned both as Loki's brother and as an epithet for Óðinn (20). This makes me think of Loki and Óðinn's mysterious blood-brotherhood, *blóði*, *Helblindi* is only mentioned once in *Gylfaginning* as Loki's brother, but it does not say if they

share parents, it is not said there, which have been commonly taken for granted, that *Fárbauti* is specifically *Helblindi*'s father, *Helblindi* is *only* mentioned as being Loki's brother¹. The saga called *Sörla þáttur* makes it even clearer as it says that *Fárbauti* just got one son in its second chapter: «Þau áttu sér einn son barna. Sá var Loki nefndr», "They had one son, and he was named Loki".

¹ «Sá er nefndr Loki eða Loftr, sonr Fárbauta jötuns. Móðir hans heitir Laufey eða Nál. Bræðr hans eru þeir Byleistr ok Helblindi».

With this I strongly suspect that *Helblindi* is exclusively an epithet for Óðinn. Indeed, as Óðinn just has one eye and cannot see as far as to *Nifl-Hel* (*Niflheimr*) the name makes sense to me. Loki's other brother is called *Byleistr*, his name is put together from the ON words *bylr*, a whirlwind or a violent gust of wind, and *eistr*, the one coming from the east, *eistr* being an epithet for a giant. *Byleistr*, "the whirlwind or the storming one coming from the east" kind of reminds me of a certain *gýgr* who is called "the giantess of the eastern storms."

Furthermore, both Loki and Gullveig-Aurboða were adopted by Óðinn into *Ásgarðr* in the ON sagas, a very odd thing for him to do as *Allvísi*. This can only mean that Gullveig and Loki tricked Óðinn and the rest of the *ásir* into believing that they were one of them. Gullveig and Loki are the only antagonistic giants who have been adopted into the realm which otherwise is strictly forbidden for any rime-thurses and *múspell*-thurses to enter.

But long after Loki had fooled the gods and brought his evil cunning upon them, his final act was to kill *Baldr*, (see my chapter on the killing of *Baldr* for a detailed survey of Gullveig and Loki's conspiracy), they finally understood his true self, and Loki withdrew from their realm *Ásgarðr*. It is said that the gods eventually found Loki hiding out in a river:

En eftir þetta falst Loki í Fránangrsforsi í lax líki.

So when Loki was revealed as Baldr's murderer he left Ásgarðr and hid transformed into a salmon in a river called Fránangrsfoss. First off, I want to put emphasis on Loki's transformation into a salmon. For me it was no accident that a salmon was chosen to allegorize Loki in the myths, because the salmon is a very strange fish and it has extraordinary qualities that fit Loki's essence in the mythology very well. The most known curiosity with the salmon, and trout, is its remarkable transformation, the salmon is something called anadromous; born in freshwater then migrates to the ocean and lives the bigger part of its life in saltwater, and finally it returns to the freshwater where it was born, the same location, to reproduce and die. The salmon's life span witness, strangely enough, of Loki's odd existence in the sagas: he is master of disguises, as well in transformation, regardless in what situation; and Loki started his journey in the underworld – or in Múspellzheimr if you will – and travelled to Miðgarðr and to Ásgarðr to live the most part of his life. In this context I compare Miðgarðr and Ásgarðr – the upper worlds – to the salty ocean water: salt being here a metaphor for “the repulsion of evil” or the “dayside” of the world “free” from thursian influences, and Loki had no problem in adjusting to this, because his Múspell-core is eternally glowing and forever concealed for anyone or anything to perceive. Subsequently Loki returns to the “nightside” – the underworld – to finish his ragnarokian journey. Analogous to the salmon, Loki goes through several major transformations throughout his journey, to best adjust to the situation at hand, this is exactly what makes him a superior thurs which no god can defeat.

Now, a natural thing for Loki to do when he is hunted by the *æsir* for the murder of one of their most beloved gods is to withdraw to his home lands; to Jötunheimr in the underworld, or even to Múspellzheimr. The last location is not reasonable, and as neither of the sagas *Lokasenna* or *Gylfaginning* explain in what direction he went (normally the sagas add cardinal

points) or where this river was located, we have to guess where he withdrew, and my best guess is of course Jötunheimr in the underworld. And why of all places does he hide in a river as a salmon? If he went back to Múspellzheimr he would be perfectly safe. There must have been something else the story-teller wanted to manifest with this strange allegorization – and I think the answer lies in the choice of name/epithet of the river Fránangrsfoss. *Frán-* can only come from one ON word: *fránn*, which means gleaming and flashing, which was only used in poetry as an epithet for serpents, swords and sharp weapons¹. *-angr-* is unmistakably the same *angr*, woe, as in *Angrboða*. *-foss* simply means river. So *fránangr* would mean some-

¹ Cleasby-Vigfusson, 1874, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*, Zoëga, 1910, *A Concise Dictionary of Old Icelandic*, and Palm, 2004, *Vikingarnas Språk*.

thing like the *shining woe*, which by me is an undeniable epithet for Gullveig: she is called *Heiðr*, the shining one, and *Angrboða*, the messenger of woe. Equally, the fact that I have already established that Gullveig is originated from water and ice connects her with rivers too of course. Furthermore, the ingenious choice of the word *fránn* which is a metaphor for a gleaming river – rivers which look most often like giant serpents – and the word *fránn*'s connection with swords in poetry in this context must have been thought of as the underworldly rivers which spring from *Hvergelmir*, rivers with poison, *eitr*, which is allegorized in the ON sagas as rivers with swords and sharp weapons on their beds.

In *Jötunheimr* lays the abode of *Angrboða* and *Hvergelmir*'s rivers most likely run through or into her abode, which is of course *Járnviðr*. So for me, *Loki* withdrew after the murder of *Baldr* to his counterpart and companion's tracts in *Járnviðr* in *Jötunheimr*. And at *Ragna Røk* *Loki* comes with the ship called *Naglfar*, the ship holds *Fenrir*, his monster kin and *Heljarsinnar*. *Gylfaginning* says:

Thither shall come *Fenrir* also and *Jörmungandr*; then *Loki* and *Hrymr* shall come there also, and with him all the rime-giants. All the champions of *Hel* follow *Loki*.

And *Völuspá* says:

Hrymr steers from the east,
the waters rise,
Jörmungandr is coiling
in *jötun-rage*.
The serpent beats the water,
and the eagle screams:
the beak tears corpses;
Naglfar is loosed.

That ship fares from the east:
come will *Muspell*'s
people over the sea,
and *Loki* steers.
The monster's kin goes
all with the wolf;
with them the brother is
of *Byleist* on their course.

This shows that *Loki* does dwell in the east in *Jötunheimr* close to *Ragna Røk*, and that *Fenrir* and all his kin follow him. *Fenrir* and his kin dwell in *Járnviðr* to-

gether with Angrboða, she is the mother to Fenrir's offspring. Naglfar must have gone by water from Jötunheimr (Járnviðr) and the only known waters in the underworld are the eleven poisonous rivers from Hvergelmir and its shore Élivágar. This can't mean anything else then that Loki abides in Járnviðr for some time. It is here my point actually lies, I dare to go as far as to think the river Fránangr that Loki hides in as a salmon, *Litr*, is in fact a metaphor for (a river in) Gullveig-Angrboða's abode.

Comparing this myth with Baldr's funeral I see many similarities: Gullveig appears in both as a powerful feminine force: a river that conceals Loki and as Hyrrokin being a powerful eastern storm. Loki also appears in both sagas as a salmon swimming in the water, and in both sagas Þórr discovers him, catches him and "reveals" Loki's true "form".

LOKI AS A LUCIFERIAN ESSENCE

Loki could be an epithet built on the meaning "to lock" or "the locker"¹, and thereby Loki could be looked upon as the one who brings the anti-cosmic light and locks up the Thur-sian Gates: Loki Thurs of Destruction, the one who triggers the day of wrath; Ragna Røk and the end of the world. Rooth tells us in her book on Loki that "according to another popular conception, the supernatural beings are 'of Lucifer's race'."²

¹ A hypothesis that has been harshly criticized by many.

² Rooth, 1961, *Loki in Scandinavian Mythology*.

As I've compared Gullveig to Lilith, I would like to, in short, represent Loki as a Luciferian essence. Loki viewed from an anti-cosmic perspective grants him many qualities linked directly to the god Lucifer – bringer of light. This is of course an angle which relates to the anti-cosmic Chaos-theory. Loki is therefore the bringer of light. The light is a representation of the *forbidden knowledge*, which the gods of cosmos have secluded from the humans to avoid conflict and resistance. This knowledge, called *gnosis*, is the wisdom of and from Chaos; *the understanding* and *the awakening* – which leads to evolution and strength. To make this all less confusing, one usually refers to the light of Lucifer as the *Black Light*, because Chaos is wrathful against the creation of cosmos, all its stagnating forms, weakness and all life enslaved to it. However, the one who sees through the cosmic light; *false light*, those who have opened their third eye and received the *black light* of Lucifer, only they look upon the Luciferian light as the bright and true one. For them, and only them, the

light of Lucifer, the light/fires of Chaos, are true. Such an awakened individual sees the cosmic light as filthy, deceiving, weak and enslaving.

Mythologies and traditions mention that Lucifer had sacrificed a great amount to come out of Chaos with Chaos-essence and -gnosis, into this world of cosmos in order to enlighten the few chosen ones. So to a Chaos-Gnostic, Lucifer is regarded as heroic, and all those who have truly received the light of Lucifer; the gnosis of one's black flame, are very grateful, living beyond question as warriors, worshippers and upholders of the supreme gods of Chaos. For those of weakness and adversary towards Chaos, the fires of Lucifer are annihilating and exterminating. His flames incinerate all to nothingness and show no mercy. For only the awakened, the allied and strong are to be kept. Everything else belongs to the demiurge of the cosmos – the enslaving force; and is therefore an enemy.

All qualities of Lucifer are visible in Loki, and undeniably so. Otherwise, without these attributes, the character of godly form some call Loki, is another form entirely. These people misunderstand Loki's nature and essence. Loki is a symbol and aspect of the incensed Chaos-fire¹, an aspect that reaches out from Chaos into the cosmos and distributes Chaos-gnosis to those receptive. Loki, like Lucifer, burns with the black fires of Chaos all illusive forms, and through that brings all that is beyond (e.g. the Chaos-essence) into light. If one studies the Norse sagas, one quickly notices that Loki, early in the dawn of gods, insinuated into the cosmic gods' world, knowing that he was to be murdered on the spot because of his thurs-blood. Yet, Loki still doubtlessly undertook the risks and managed to infiltrate, which leads to the fall of the World. This allegory of the very primitive Chaos-essence concerning Loki can be interpreted and understood in many sagas in the ancient Scandinavian mythology, where he "kills", "deceives" and "misleads" manifold of the cosmic gods and purposes, just to guide the thurs-race into the World. Loki is the supreme leader of all that is dark², with a bright torch in his left hand; which he reaches above his head as he always travels anterior in the front-line. This is the fundamental and prime

essence of Loki in the sagas, in which the giant-race alluded to the Chaos-essence, and the cosmic World and its gods to the illusive forms in cosmos.

¹ In the ancient times it was called *Muspilli* – as from the fires of Múspellzheimr.

² All that belongs to the anti-cosmic Chaos.

Clearly, Loki is the *messenger, liberator, defender and leader* – he bears the same heroic role as Lucifer.

Heill Loki!

Heill Lokaprekr!

Importantly, one *cannot* simply transfer all qualities, facts and mythologies from Lucifer to Loki, or the reverse. Mythology is mythology and it is simply a tool for humanity to chronicle spiritual experiences and revelations. Yet, the *fundamental significance of the deities' existence* is the core of importance and the very relevant source of understanding, and this may transfer from one deity to another. One must know the difference between *Lucifer* and the *Luciferian Powers*. The Luciferian teachings mention Lucifer as the *Highest Principle of the Illumination*. Yet, below him, so to speak, resides other emanations that are Luciferian in form, effect and essence.

Let us take the god Azazel for example; he is not Lucifer, but Luciferian. This because he is included in a system where Lucifer/Satan already is the highest principle and by that he becomes a lower aspect of the same essence, an essence equalling *The Heralds of the Black Light*¹.

¹ According to the Nephilistic-Luciferian tradition.

² Rooth, 1961, *Loki in Scandinavian Mythology*.

Lucifer is not in himself fallen, but has let his light fall into the cosmic abyss to enlighten those who are receptive and of his essence.

GULLVEIG AND LOKI ANDROGYNOUS

It is pretty obvious that both Gullveig and Loki were viewed as being androgynous, something that must have been passed down from their thursian forefathers as an adaptation, as this is not a quality known amongst the gods. The very first known thursian giants, Aurgelmir and Þrúðgelmir, were androgynous and this aspect seems to have just been passed down to certain ragnarokian and sympathetic thurses, amongst these are Niðhöggr, Gullveig and Loki. Loki in, what Rooth calls it, the Ásgarðr Myth² by Snorri (*Gylfaginning* 42) turns himself into a mare and lures the stallion Svaðilfari away with her neighing, some time later Loki as a mare gives birth to the eight-legged giant horse Sleipnir. Sleipnir's deformity testifies of its giant-descent. *Völuspá in skamma* supports Snorri's saga: «ól ulf Loki við Angrboða, en Sleipni gat við Svaðilfara», "Loki bore the wolf with Angrboða, and Sleipnir with Svaðilfari", and *Lokasenna* 33 testifies that Loki has given birth: «hitt er undr, er áss ragr er hér inn of kominn ok hefir sá börn of borit», "it is incredible that a such unmanly áss-god has come here, who has given birth to a child", which most likely refers to Loki transformed into a mare. Rooth, amongst others, doubt that this is an authentic ON Loki trait, but I feel that they misunderstand the essence of the trait itself. Deformity and androgyny are thursian traits only, and they were not added to the sagas

¹An acosmic lineal remnant. | for them to be comical, they were added as testimonies of essential thursian aspects, and their alienation to static form¹.

*

As a supernatural curse upon the cosmos,
I would say that Gullveig is the impulse and Loki is the consequence.

LOKASKRÁ

The seering of the worshipper

Sýn †

I am the almighty god,
 I live in the shadows of the *ásir*.
 I am no small god, I am the greatest.

I dwell in darkness,
 I jump from a shadow to another,
 I carve active runes on everything I touch.

No one can look into my abyss,
 as my manifestation is manifold.
 One I acknowledge, one I conceal,
 accessible for they who seek.

One I call Helheimr for those who see black,
 another I call Jötunheimr
 to the *ásir* and men.

Yet another I call Ámsvartnir,
 where I conjure Gullveig's runes
 and spin black threads,
 which I fasten upon gods, men, and the world's all corners.
 I spin and spin,
 we alone know all the worlds' corners.
 Its rim rests on the edge of my sword.
 The worlds are in my flaming grip.
 I manifest through †.

My name is Loki
 and I have influenced the entity of *goð*.
 Sewn it shut.

As a fly I defy,
 as a wolf I am wry,
 as a falcon I spy,
 as a salmon I am sly.

As a man I am,
 as a werewolf I damn,
 as a god I sham,
 as an ally I am.

As a shadow I haunt,
 as one I am all and nothing,
 as a power I drink from the horn of Chaos.

As enigmas I act,
 as wisdom I am created,
 as light I obscure the worlds.

I am smokeless flames.
 Thus I am Loki.

They call me oath-breaker,
 thus I care not for promises,
 thus I care not for life.

Though they all are of my taste,
 though they all are food for my hungry flaming jaws.
 Thus they all feed my devotion.

They call me oath-breaker,
 thus oaths are my forebode,
 thus it does not burden me.

My flaming tongue always scorns and deceives,
 thus it is my truth,
 thus it is my wisdom.

Dvergsknifr tried to hinder me,
 what a mockery!

Nothing can hinder Loki.
 Dvergsband tried to keep me,
 what a mockery!
 Nothing can keep Loki.

Sýn <

The Múspell-flames are my true manifestation,
the *goð* know this, and dare not to seize me,
because I crush the entity of *goð* at will.

I am the restlessness in the flames,
mankind knows this, I am their leader,
I devour the shining and incinerate the blind.

I am the first-born of the Múspell-flames,
from the south I am invoked,
I only acknowledge blazing will.

I spin the destruction,
I spin the runes of Múspell's carriers of iron-wolves
to ride the golden waves of wrath.

I dissolve in purpose to strengthen.
I am Surtr's blade.
I am Surtr's purpose.

I hold the key to the only lock,
the apparatus which is called contraction.

I devour illusions.
I cut divine power like clay.
My essence feeds the sons of Múspell.

I am the black fire and destructor of weakness.
I am the provoker of power and supernatural reasoning.
I am unlimitedness and lawlessness.

I am the spider,
I am the net,
I am the wrath the *goð* should not have upset.

SUMMARY

I. Loki and Gullveig's relation is based on a companionship to act as a twin-power which complement each other as a masculine and feminine alien opposition to the world and its demiurge.

II. Loki and Gullveig are the begetters and ancestors of all monsters, e.g. troll, werewolves, wolves, and supernatural beings.

III. Loki is the father of Jörmungandr, Fenrir and Hel.

IV. Loki and Gullveig's purpose is evidently to infiltrate the very essence of the world's "godhead", goð or regin, in Ásgarðr and Miðgarðr to poison it from within and thereby killing it.

V. Loki is a thursian giant, not an áss. He transformed himself into an áss to mislead the vanir and the æsir; just like Gullveig under her disguise Aurboða.

VI. Loki is strongly connected to the Gambanteinn-myth.

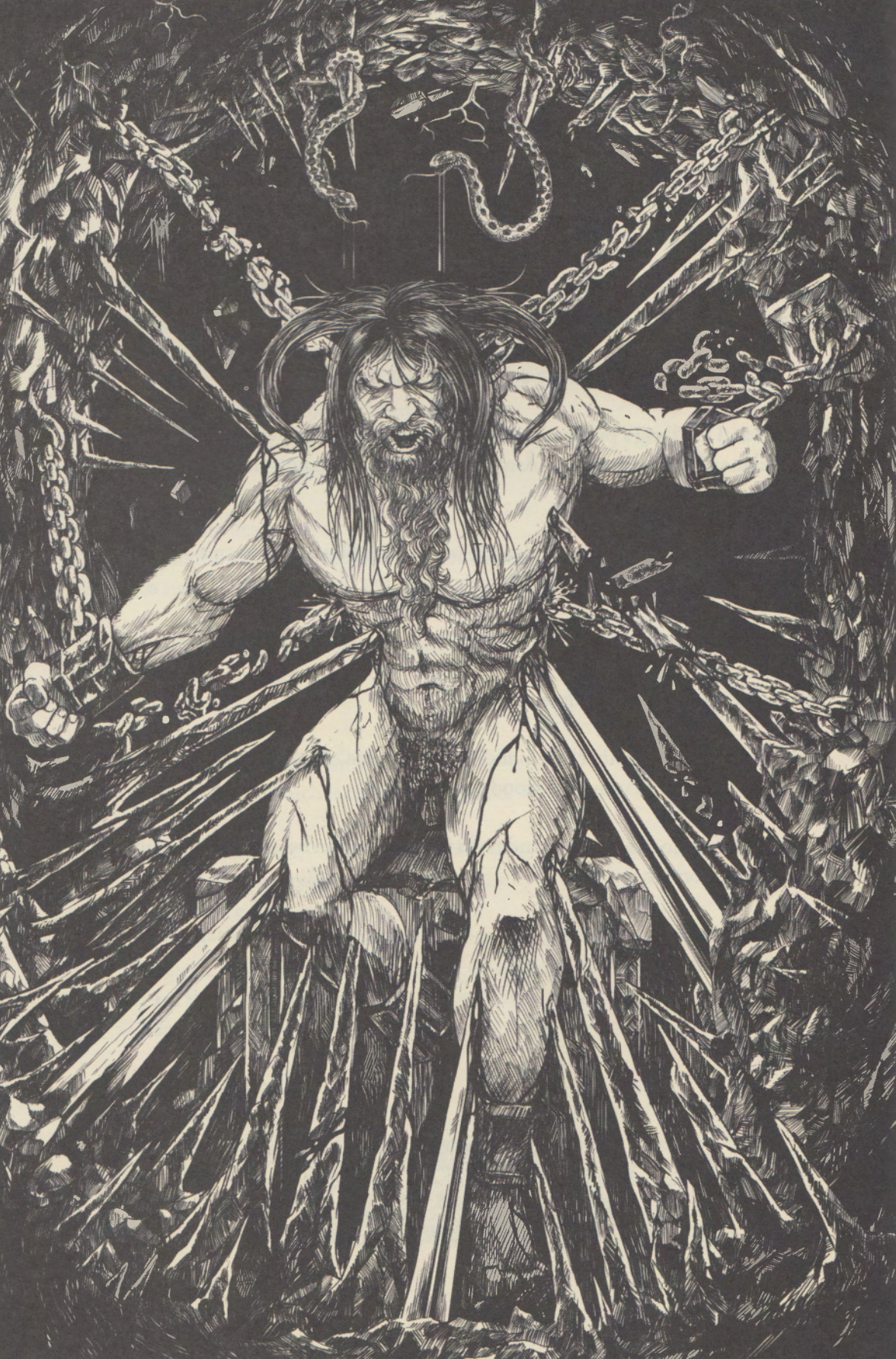
VII. Loki is a master of transformation.

VIII. Loki's named "brother" Helblindi is most likely Óðinn, and he is therefore just linked to Loki by an unsolved blood-brotherhood.

IX. Loki's mythological essence and traits in the sagas can be compared to those of Lucifer and Prometheus'.

X. And Loki, as well as Gullveig, had androgynous traits in the ON sagas, a very rare quality only inborn in giants.





★

Hail Loki!

Múspellpur and warrior of Múspellzheimr!

Come loose and fulfill your purpose!

Unleash your blazing wrath!

★

I invoke your flaming essence!

I invoke your illuminating power!

★

**Loki, illuminate me with your flaming Múspell-light
so that my ego dissolves and my spirit becomes free!**

★

The Death of Baldr

This survey is mainly born from *Hávamál* and *Helgakviða Hjörvarðssonar* found in *Sæmundar Edda*, and *Gylfaginning* found in *Snorra Edda*. As well as Rydberg's *Undersökning i Germanisk Mythologi* I 1886, II 1889, Bugge's *De Nordiske Gude- og Heltesagns Oprindelse II: Helge-Digterne* 1896, and Saxo's *Gesta Danorum*.

¹ Rydberg I 1886, II 1889, *Undersökningar i Germanisk Mythologi*.

dersökning i Germanisk Mythologi I 1886, II 1889, Bugge's *De Nordiske Gude- og Heltesagns Oprindelse II: Helge-Digterne* 1896, and Saxo's *Gesta Danorum*.

A STRATEGIC DEED TO PROVOKE THE WRATH OF RAGNA RØK

"Hyrrokin retaliated on the *ásir* with the help of Loki causing Baldr's death."¹

BALDR MYTHOS OVERVIEW

I. Baldr got horrible nightmares: death bringing illusory apparitions visited him at night and indicated that he would die.

II. Høðr went to war against Baldr and the *ásir*.

III. Frigg, Baldr's mother, got everything to swear an oath: life, fire, water, earth, ore and iron, rock and stone, tree, disease and animals.

IV. The gods amused themselves with throwing and shooting at Baldr in the courtyard of Valhøll.

V. Loki disliked that nothing hurt Baldr.

VI. In the disguise of an old woman, Loki went to Frigg and learned from her that she had not taken an oath from a small sapling of mistletoe which grew west of Valhøll, because she thought it was too young to demand an oath from.

VII. Loki took that very mistletoe and made an arrow from it assumedly with help from the thurs Þjazi.

VIII. He went back to the courtyard, to the gods and helped Baldr's "blind" brother Høðr to shoot the arrow at Baldr. Baldr fell dead.

IX. The death of Baldr was the biggest misfortune of all mankind and all the gods.

X. Óðinn took this the hardest and understood at once what this meant for them all.

XI. The gods could not demand retaliation because it all happened on holy and peaceable ground.

XII. By Frigg's will, Óðinn's son Hermóðr took the assignment to go to Hel to offer a ransom for the dead Baldr.

XIII. But the corpse of Baldr was brought to his ship Hringhorni.

XIV. And no one of the gods could dislodge the ship.

XV. Óðinn then sent for the giantess Hyrrokin which came riding on a thurs-wolf with snakes as bridles. And she freed the ship with ease.

XVI. This made Þórr mad as he grabbed his hammer to crush the witch's head. But all the gods asked him not to and stopped him.

XVII. And they burned Baldr's corpse, together with his wife Nanna, Óðinn's ring Draupnir and Baldr's horse.

XVIII. Óðinn's son got the promise of Hel for Baldr to return to the living, if all the living things in the world cried for Baldr.

XIX. All cried for Baldr but one being, the giantess-witch called Þökk.

XX. Óðinn uses forbidden witchcraft at Rindr's, and Høðr is killed by Óðinn's son Váli.

XXI. Loki gets punished for the deed of killing Baldr.

Note: Snorri's account of this mythological saga is constructed from both preserved poetic sources and lost.

¹ Depicted by some medieval authors as a Scandinavian Jesus figure.

² This direction and location of the mistletoe sapling is most curious to me. I figure that Snorri chose west for the sapling to grow as it is the closest way to the outer rim of the world from Valhøll and heaven, where the abyss Ámsvartnir lies and surrounds the worlds. West might even have suggested that the sapling was supposed to grow in Útgardr.

³ I find this detail as being a proof of how excellent Loki was in the magical trait of transformation. He just transformed himself into a woman and the goddess Frigg, who being a *gōð* and should be more powerful and sharper than a giant, just bought his trick and gave away what could be used to kill Baldr. In contrast, when Þórr tried to "transform" into a woman to fool Þrymr in *Þrymskviða* he failed as Þrymr was very suspicious, and it was Loki who had to "convince" Þrymr that the dressed up Þórr was a woman.

Baldr, the *áss*-god and protector of the sun – the promoter of cosmic goodness and righteousness¹, is the perfect target to destroy if you want the *ésir* and their worlds to weaken as a result of confusion and finally collapse. Indeed, this is exactly what the cunning and triumphant primordial thurses Loki and Gullveig thought of. I will here expound my personal theory of Gullveig's role in this strategic move; taken from the ON mythology and some medieval sagas.

THE DARKNESS' PREPARATION AND FORMATION

Before the killing of Baldr, he had nightmares, which he called visions of his own death and was sure that he would soon die. All the gods became troubled and thought of something that could save him. They agreed that Frigg would ask for safety for Baldr from all kinds of dangers – fire, water, iron and metal of all kinds, stones, earth, trees, sicknesses, beasts, birds, venom and serpents – and to swear an oath not to harm Baldr. This kind of an oath had to be a magical spell otherwise arrows and rocks would be harmful. It is said that they all agreed, but rime-thurses were not included in this list; Gullveig and Loki did not swear any oath, nor did the worlds' now most feared being, the furious world-hater Þjazi, who after being known as Valand and becoming *his own wrath* turned into a terrible rime-thurs.

The saga explains further that a certain small sapling, a *teinn*, of Mistletoe which grew to the west of Valhøll² had not sworn the oath not to hurt Baldr. Loki, the *Ragnarokian prospector*, who I believe was involved in this plot from the beginning, knew exactly where to find this plant; as he and Gullveig could have put a protective spell on the plant to be overlooked by Frigg, a theory that I feel corresponds to the ON mythological narration tradition. However, *Gylfaginning* clarifies that Loki transformed himself into a woman and went to Frigg to ask where this sapling grew, and Frigg gladly spoke of this.

When Loki had gathered the Mistletoe¹ I like to imagine that he brought it to his and Gullveig's ally Þjazi who made, with his incredible blacksmith-craft, a perfect arrow from the Mistletoe and cast ominous black magical powers into it, and it was thereby called Mistilteinn, synonymous to the weapon Gambanteinn in the ON mythology; which is proven by the fact that Mistilteinn is actually in a list for sword-kennings in Snorri's *Nafnaþulur* 42. Indeed, that is how I connect Þjazi to this myth.

Teinn means branch, also rod and sapling, and it is often used as a word for a sword in the old myths, as in *lævateinn*/*hævateinn*², *gambanteinn*³, etc. The interesting thing is that Mistilteinn became a name for the sword of revenge belonging to Surtr, which is the same sword which is called gambanteinn in the old sagas and *lævateinn*/*hævateinn*/*homateinn*: Saxo called it *cuspis* in Latin after translating *Fjölsvinnsmál*'s name of the sword Broddr⁴.⁵ All these sword-synonyms are in analogy with the sword of retaliation that Loki made⁶ and Þjazi fulfilled.

From the day, or even earlier I would say, the mistletoe refused to swear the oath, it was connected with the sword which was going to trigger Ragna Røk and to scythe down the gods and the cosmos. If Loki went to Þjazi and asked him to forge it into an adversary-teinn and cast black runes upon it, I think it indirectly complements the mistletoe's transformation from a plant to a Ragnarokian weapon – *the sword of revenge*.

But why did Frigg just leave the mistletoe out? Or did this lonesome *teinn* reject the oath? Something must have influenced this result. Better yet, something must have given it this purpose for a very devastating reason. As stated above, Baldr started to get severe nightmares: death bringing illusory apparitions visited him at night and acknowledged his death. Frigg, Óðinn's wife, queen of Ásgarðr, made a magical oath not to hurt Baldr, and supposedly she had the power to make everyone in the whole cosmos to agree with this oath. This depiction of her power is mighty; the myths said that Frigg just let the mistletoe be: "because she thought it was too young to demand an oath from". Well doesn't that sound like a fraud to escape the actual explanation? There must have been an immeasurable amount of "too young" plants throughout the world. Why just let this particular sapling be? It makes no

¹ Snorri says here that «Loki tók mistiltein ok sleit upp», "Loki pulled up the Mistletoe", as if it was growing in the ground. It is evident that Snorri had no knowledge of the Mistletoe plant, I doubt that he had ever seen one, because it is impossible to make an arrow from it, even more impossible from a Mistletoe sapling.

² *Fjölsvinnsmál*.

³ *Skírnismál*.

⁴ Broddr means pike and in *Fjölsvinnsmál* it is the name of Hævateinn.

⁵ Rydberg, I 1886, II 1889, *Undersökningar i Germanisk Mythologi*.

⁶ *Fjölsvinnsmál*.

sense. So, the little tiny plant just simply gets away with not making the oath, supposedly it had that much power that it could just say no and not be affected by Frigg's mighty spell. Has this tiny mistletoe in some way more power than Frigg? I don't think so; there must have been something that supported this mistletoe.

¹ In Cleasby-Vigfusson, 1874, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary* and Zoëga, 1910, *A Concise Dictionary of Old Icelandic* *flagð* is explained to mean an ogre (ogress) or giantess, which is analogous to ON *troll*, both being supernatural giants and monsters. Egilsson, 1931, *Lexicon Poeticum* confirms *flagð* to be equivalent to *troll*.

² Cleasby-Vigfusson, 1874, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*, and Hellquist, 1939, *Svensk Etymologisk Ordbok*.

³ Hellquist, 1939, *Svensk Etymologisk Ordbok* under *mara*.

⁴ Cleasby-Vigfusson, 1874, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*, and Zoëga, 1910, *A Concise Dictionary of Old Icelandic*.

⁵ Snorri's narration says, from his own personal conception and understanding of the old sagas, "in the disguise of an old woman, Loki went to Frigg and learned from her that she had not took an oath from a small sapling of mistletoe which grew west of Valhall, because she thought it was too young to crave an oath from".

1. Baldr got struck by nightmares in the form of death bringing illusory apparitions that visited him at night. This is a representative aspect of Lilith's craft, genius and succubus demon-daughters Lilin in Judaic mythology, and I found a relevant connection here with her and Gullveig. Gullveig is the mother of all *flagð*¹, giants, monsters, and troll, which *Völuspá in skamma* 12 tells us: "Loptr got pregnant with the evil woman (Gullveig); from this have all troll (*flagð*) come." And ON *mara*, as in night-mare², was in Old Scandinavia an ogress, a *flagð*, who came to people at night and terrorized them. A very interesting detail is explained by Hellquist³ that *mara* derives from the Germanic root *mer*, to crush, as the ON word *merja*⁴, which actually would make the *mara* some kind of (or connected to) a death-giantess, which makes the supernatural entity *mara* interlinked with other supernatural beings (giants) as *Margerðr*, *Sinmara*, and *kveldriða*. Gullveig herself is not narrated as being a bringer of nightmares in the ON myths, but as I just proven she is very much connected to it.

2. If Frigg was that mighty in magic to make everything not be able to hurt Baldr, there is only one witch in the sagas that can overpower a strong *áss*-spell like that, which I have proven above, and that is Gullveig. Gullveig was created in the beginning of the worlds by the ancestors of the ur-thurses *Ymir*, *Þrudgelmir* and *Bergelmir*. The dark powers of witchcraft and runes were entangled and a part of Gullveig's essence, she was the origin of the art. This was before even Frigg was born.

3. Loki, Gullveig's counterpart, was the one who found this sapling. In the whole cosmos, there was just one tiny plant that refused the oath and Loki knew where to find it⁵. And the only ones who assumedly would be able to know about this sapling and its rejection would be Frigg and the one supporting the teinn and "put the protective spell upon it." And I must say that the wise Frigg have seen Loki trick the gods many times and the gods have had sus-

picion towards Loki because of it, and I have a hard time thinking she would let Loki know about this sapling, even though Loki was a “trusted” giant within Ásgarðr and her husband’s blood-brother¹. This is a paradox though, because we have to remember that Loki could transform himself into anything, and thereby would be able to trick Frigg by having an appearance of a woman.

I believe it was not Loki alone who made this happen, at least not in the original sagas, before Snorri’s account, because he had such a delicate position amongst the gods already. Remember, this Baldr-scheme happened near Ragna Røk and the *ásir* were already suspicious of Loki, and you could say he was about to get caught, actually this was the last adverse deed he did until the *ásir* caught him and punished him. I suspect that it was from the beginning a deed carried out both by Loki and the Old One in Járnsviðr, Gullveig.

A NOTE ON THE MISTLETOE

It’s interesting for me that the old poets picked out the mistletoe of all plants to be the deadly weapon, because the non-fictional plant’s stalk is pretty frail and you would not be able to make a strong arrow from it. However, if you look at the fact that the juices from the plant’s leaves, berries and stem are fatally poisonous when it comes in contact with blood², which hunters in our ancient times knew and used on their arrowheads, and easily killed their prayers with, it makes it pretty obvious that the old poets used this plant as the lethal arrow which killed Baldr. However, something which surprises me is that Snorri disregarded the fact that the mistletoe is a parasitic plant, which depends on and lives on other trees and shrubs. In the *Edda* the author is talking about this lonely sapling growing by itself on the ground, «*en Loki tók mistiltein ok sleit upp*», well that is just impossible. This “disregard” tells me, once again, that the author is just oblivious to the sinister sides of the mythology – meaning that he allegorize Baldr in detail and everything around him, even the *ásir*, but misses a full moon clear thing such as the fact that the mistletoe is not able to grow by itself on the ground, or be made into an arrow.

¹ This is one version, but in the sagas the gods were at this time of conflict on the verge of not trusting Loki, so I think this was just an easy way for the authors to go around the facts.

² But you can eat the leaves, berries and stem and it will not hurt you. It is even said that it will make your immune-system stronger and that it is effective against some cancer-cells.

Another interesting fact is that of an old saying; the mistletoe grows where lightning has struck a tree. This is interesting because Loki is said to have been created from lightning hitting a tree, i.e. Fárbaumi and Laufey.

And lastly, with the mistletoe's infamous reputation of being able to open the gates to the worlds of death, I think it fits pretty well in this myth.

HØÐR KILLING BALDR AND VÁLI KILLING HØÐR

So, the gods amused themselves by throwing spears and shooting arrows at Baldr. And Loki felt disgusted by watching it. However, as cunningly as always, Loki in a disguise of a woman had already gone to Frigg and learned where to get this mistletoe, and I believe, made a weapon from it with Þjazi's help. Then, he somehow got Baldr's brother Høðr to shoot the black magical arrow at Baldr and he struck him dead. Høðr, son of Óðinn, known by earlier sagas to be an excellent hunter, warrior and archer, was the perfect "puppet" for Loki to choose. Loki naturally wanted the best archer for his and Gullveig's grand endeavor – somebody close to Óðinn and Baldr who could easily join their game and aim at Baldr with precision without attracting any suspicion. Indeed, Høðr's earlier hostile incident with Baldr over Baldr's wife Nanna makes Høðr an even more ideal "puppet", which will bring him death by brotherly retaliation and make him descend, too, into the underworld. That Baldr and Høðr have been enemies in the Old Norse mythology is proven in the epithets *dólgr Haðar* and *Baldrs andskoti*.

Now, let's take a look at Høðr's "blindness". How is it that one of the most successful warriors and archers – he is also known for being a fine hunter – in the race all of a sudden is called blind and has to get help from a malicious giant to be able to aim his bow at a standing target? It makes no sense. I have a hard time believing that the ancient poets just forgot about Høðr's skills and mistake him for a blind fool. No way, evidently, it is Snorri that just made this up to fit his story. I am pretty convinced that Snorri and other interpreters of the older sagas got it all wrong and translated the words too literally. Because of the fact that Høðr was not aware of the sly plans by Gullveig and Loki, he was kept in the dark and unaware (hence blind) of the purpose of that lethal mistletoe-arrow; which fits in a common saying – which is informal and slang – that reads that to be "blind" means that you "do not know about something that other people know about", and does not mean physically blind.

*

Here is my summary of the battle between Høðr and Baldr. Høðr who is called *Baldrs* and *skoti* in *Völuspá* 33, Baldr's adversary, and Baldr who is called *dólgr Haðar* in *Skáldskaparmál* 12, Høðr's enemy; epithets which prove their history of enmity towards each other. It all began when Høðr was out hunting in distant woods so far away that no one had set foot there before him, he had gone so far in mists that he got lost. Suddenly he ran into three witches (he met one or three witches, depending on the version of the saga) who knew his name and claimed they could make him triumph in battle. They told him that they would come invisibly to the battleground and aid him, and they supposedly gave him an impenetrable chain-mail. They also told Høðr that Baldr wanted Nanna; Høðr's own half-sister that he himself was in love with, and she with him. (According to Saxo, Høðr was adopted by the moon-god Gævarr; father to Nanna, so Nanna is Høðr's foster-sister). After this meeting with the woman/women, Høðr went home to his foster-father Gævarr and asked for Nanna's hand, Gævarr said that he would love to see him get married to his daughter, but Baldr had just asked for her hand and Gævarr was afraid that Baldr would be enraged and kill him if he declined his request. However, Gævarr told Høðr that there was a sword that would kill Baldr (this mythological sword of vengeance is analogous to Gambanteinn-Mistilteinn.) Unfortunately for Høðr, the sword was almost impossible to get, it was hidden in an abnormally cold and most impenetrable land, and guarded within a mountain by a forest-being called Mimingus – who also wore an arm-ring which increases richness. After following all of Gævarr's advice in getting to Mimingus' abode, Høðr manage to obtain the mighty sword and the enriching arm-ring. So when Baldr went to Gævarr to ask for Nanna's hand, Høðr decided to go to war with Baldr with Gævarr's advice and foreseeing. The first war between Høðr and Baldr, Høðr won¹. After the war, he went to Gævarr to marry Nanna. However, Baldr did not give up, this time he went to war with Høðr and won. By this time Baldr started to be haunted in his dreams by apparitions in Nanna's shape. Then, Høðr went to war with Baldr a second time, but lost the war and had to retreat all alone. Grieved by his loss he went out to the woods to wander the most deserted lands where no human had yet set foot. In this land, all of a sudden, he came across a cave where three unknown women sat. He recognized them because he had met them before, and it was from them he got the impenetrable chain-mail he used in the wars with Baldr. They asked him why he was wandering in their lands and he told them about his failed war. He blamed them because they had promised him victory the last time they spoke. They answered him that he had heavily weakened his enemies and that he would probably win if he got some of the wonderful nourishment that strengthened Baldr's powers. In so saying they caused Høðr to go into

¹ The *ásir* fought on Baldr's side in this war, which means that Høðr went to war against the *ásir*.

battle with Baldr a third time. During the war, Høðr went out one night to spy on his enemy, when he saw three *dísir*, which Høðr presumed were the ones making the strengthening nourishment, leaving Baldr's camp. He followed them back to their abode, and after they had been acquainted with him one of the *dísir* wanted to serve Høðr some of the strengthening nourishment. However, the older one said that it would be an act of treachery towards Baldr to give Høðr it too, but Høðr assured them that he was just one of Høðr's men, not Høðr himself. So doing, he got the nourishment and a mighty belt of victory. On his way back to his camp he met his enemy Baldr and struck him with a fatal wound with his sword. Later Óðinn, at Rindr's, used witchcraft to spawn Váli to kill Høðr.

¹ Rydberg, I 1886, II 1889, *Undersökningar i Germanisk Mythologi*.

In Saxo's hero-version of the Baldr-myth, Høðr as Hotherus gets help in the war by someone Saxo called Helgo of Halogaland (in *Þorsteins saga Víkingssonar*, Saga of Thorstein son of Víking, known as Hálogi of Hálogaland), whom Rydberg proves to be Loki¹.

This is obviously an Old saga, which just leaves us traces of its originality in sundry newer sagas; e.g. Saxo's *Gesta Danorum* and the *Hávamál* episode about Loddafafnir, which can be compared to the Høðr-myth.

What I suspect in the drama about Høðr and Baldr's battle is that Høðr went as far as the dark woods in the east which are often explained to lay in Jötunheimr in ON sagas, and vast woods of mists, where Høðr got lost, which are often suggested to be Járnviðr, Gullveig's residence. It was in this misty and distant wood that he met a witch, or three (3 is Gullveig-Heiðr-Aurboða's magical and mythological corresponding number), who offered to help him in the battle against Baldr and the *ásir*. I believe this referred to Gullveig as a giant-witch connected more than once to war-myths.

If we look at the whole Baldr-myth and extract eleven fundamental events it would be:

1. Gullveig and Loki plan a strategy to kill Baldr.
2. Høðr goes to war against Baldr and the *ásir*.
3. Baldr is afflicted with visions of his own death.
4. Óðinn visits Gullveig in the underworld to ask about Baldr's future.
5. Loki collects the weapon called Mistilteinn.
6. Loki tricks Høðr into killing Baldr.

7. Baldr descends into the underworld where he is kept by the giantess Hel.
8. The *ásir* visits Hel in the underworld to beg her to release Baldr, but she refuses until all cry for him.
9. A giantess named Þökk refuses.
10. The *ásir* revenge Baldr's death by killing Høðr.
11. The *ásir* also caught Loki for being the mastermind behind this whole plot, and as they cannot kill him, he gets sent to Lyngvi and stays bound until Ragna Røk.

Loki's part in this plot is evident, but Gullveig's is not. As there is not much written proof of her involvement we have to understand the background to the myth. Several things point to her involvement though; 1) it was most likely Gullveig or her Járniðjur in the Ironwood who cunningly inspired and supported Høðr to go to battle with Baldr and the *ásir* to prepare a solid wedge between Høðr and Baldr, as it seems like a typical and cunning thing for her and Loki to do, 2) the strong protective magical spell on the mistletoe *teinn*, 3) the deathly visions and nightmares that Baldr had, 4) Gullveig made sure that Baldr's funeral ship would not move, so that the *ásir* had to call for her aid to "push" it out to sea as a giantess of the *eastern storms*; an allegorization for Gullveig as Hyrrokin to send (as in killing) Baldr into the underworldly realm of her daughter Hel – I am convinced that this strange episode was a proof by the authors of Gullveig's involvement in Baldr's death, 5) Gullveig's daughter Hel is of course in alliance with Loki and Gullveig and therefore refuses to let Baldr go, 6) Gullveig as the giantess Þökk refuses to weep for Baldr so that he stays in the underworld bound by the giants.

BALDR'S FUNERAL AND HYRROKIN

The *ásir* took Baldr's corpse to the sea to give him an honorable funeral in his ship out to sea; his ship was well-known and called Hringhorni. The ship was big and the *ásir* could not find the strength to move the ship from land, not even their strongest *áss* Þórr. So Óðinn called for the giantess Hyrrokin from Jötunheimr. She came, riding on a thursian wolf, as big as a bear, with poisonous snakes as reins (I dare to guess that it was supposed to be Fenrir she came riding on; because the struggle by Óðinn's berserks to toss him to the ground, shows the wolf's immense giant-strength and this allegory is familiar with the myth when Fenrir was in his youth and got too big and wild for the *ásir* to control, and finally they captured him with big difficulty. Fenrir just ripped the magically strengthened chains made by dwarves into pieces. It took them three attempts and Týr's hand before they were

¹ «Þá var sent í Jötunheima eftir gýgi þeirri er Hyrrokkin hét, en er hún kom og reið vargi og hafði höggorm að taumum, þá hljóp hún af hestinum, en Óðinn kallaði til berserki fjóra að gæta hestsins og fengu þeir eigi haldið nema þeir felldu hann. Þá gekk Hyrrokkin á framstafn nökkvans og hratt fram í fyrsta viðbragði, svo að eldur hraut úr hlunnunum og lönd öll skulfu». – *Gylfaginning*.

² If you read about Þórr you will see that he is known as a grumpy and childish killer of women – take Gullveig and Hel as examples.

³ My personal translation would be: "The very strong giantess made Óðinn's ship lumber forth, and Óðinn's warriors toppled over her horse."

⁴ Because Litir is a name of a dwarf in *Völuspá*: «Veggr ok Gandalf, Vindalf, Þorinn, Þrárr ok Þráinn, Þekkr, Litir ok Vitir, Nýr ok Nýráðr, nú hefi ek dverga, Reginn ok Ráðsviðr, rétt of talða».

⁵ «Þá stóð Þór að og vígði bálið með Mjöllni, en fyrir fótum hans rann dvergur nokkur, sá er Litur nefndur, en Þór spyrnti fæti sínum á hann og hratt honum í eldinn, og brann hann». – *Gylfaginning*.

able to chain Fenrir down.) She jumped off the wolf and Óðinn ordered four berserks to hold it down but they could not find the strength until they heaved him to the ground, a wolf this big and strong must have been Fenrir. Hyrrokkin went up to the ship after Óðinn had asked her to launch it in the sea, and in one movement she tossed the ship with such speed that flames burst out from out under the ship and the ground quaked¹. Þórr with his childish and grumpy temper got so mad that he grabbed his hammer in order to crush Hyrrokkin's head². However, the ásir asked Þórr not to kill her, saying that they wanted peace between her and them.

An interesting thing is to compare the sagas and see the development of its contents. The Old Norse rune-masters warned about one staring blind on the text because they were written down hundreds of years after being orally spread. The *Gylfaginning* was inspired by the older *Húsdrápa* which explained the myth about the giantess' arrival and her transportation:

Húsdrápa:

Fullöflug lét fjalla
fram hafsleipni þramma
Hildir, enn Hropts of gildar
hjálmda mar felldu.³

Gylfaginning:

Þá var sent í Jötunheima eftir gýgi þeirri er Hyrrokkin hét, en er hún kom og reið vargi og hafði höggorm að taumum, þá hljóp hún af hestinum, en Óðinn kallaði til berserki fjóra að gæta hestsins og fengu þeir eigi haldið nema þeir felldu hann.

Then something really interesting happens, before the very feet of Þórr runs a *litir* (often interpreted as a dwarf⁴), which means salmon and is also an epithet to Loki. Þórr kicks Litir into the flames of the funeral pyre and he burns⁵. This is so out of context that the authors had to have been signifying something with this Litir character. One of my personal understandings of this is that the author wanted to

allegorize Þórr as Loki's captor; because of the saga of Fránangrsfors where Þórr captures Loki in the guise of a salmon. Instead of just giving Þórr an epithet, the author made an epic allegory of Þórr kicking Loki into the fire.

First of all, Hyrrokin is another name for Gullveig, and in some way the authors wanted to have Gullveig's essence present, and assumedly show how Gullveig is following her task from the beginning and to the very end. The same goes for Loki, he arrives in the myth as a salmon, which the tricky Old Norse authors try to hide by calling him Litr. Maybe the translators and interpreters of the old sagas got it all wrong, that instead it was Loki as a salmon coming swimming in the sea to spy or enjoy the burning of Baldr's corpse and funeral. And that Þórr spotted him and kicked him into the flames of the pyre, which would not kill him because Loki was created from flames and instead he would take pleasure in it. Both he and Gullveig are flame-resistant according to the old sagas. The author of this epic myth most likely wanted to emphasize the intelligence and masterminds behind this strategic deed – Loki-Litr and Gullveig-Hyrrokin. Loki, just as Gullveig, is here following his task from the beginning and to the very end by showing up in this funeral episode. As an ending of the myth of Baldr's death – the whole myth of Baldr's funeral – Hyrrokin and Litr holds so many allegories and indications to Gullveig and Loki's plot, that I personally believe that the authors wanted to reassure the readers and listeners of this myth that Gullveig and Loki were the foundation of the killing of Baldr and the trigger of Ragna Røk. Although, the saga did actually not end there.

BALDR IN HEL'S GRIP

After the death of Baldr and when he is staying in Niflhel, Óðinn and the ásir asked Hel; goddess of the underworld, to give Baldr and his wife Nanna the chance to return. Hel cunningly told Óðinn and the ásir that she could grant Baldr and his wife this under the condition that all the beings throughout the world will weep for his death. But there was one, one grim being that rejected this action: Þökk her name was, the giantess sitting outside her cave and refused to weep for Baldr. She said: "Þökk will weep dry tears for Baldr." Because of this, Baldr and his wife never returned to the living. This mysterious being is not mentioned elsewhere in the sagas, not anywhere in the mythology as a whole. I think it is obvious that the authors wanted the evil behind this plot – the killing of Baldr – personified and disguised, and between the lines it was self-evident that Þökk was a manifestation of Gullveig, Loki, and Hel's opposition. Furthermore, isn't it curious that she had the name Þökk which means "thanks"? «*Baldr væri grátinn ór helju*», "that Baldr shall be wept out

of hel"; is it Hel the giantess, the dead, or Helheimr? I think Þökk's wonderful answer is as diffuse as everything else concerning Hel: «*haldi Hel því, er hefir*», "Hel shall keep what Hel has". Again, is it Hel the giantess, the dead, or Helheimr? In my opinion, logically Þökk is Hel, as it is Hel who asks for everything in the worlds to weep

¹ «*finna þeir í helli nökkurum, hvar gýgr sat. Hon nefndist Þökk. Þeir biðja hana gráta Baldr ór Helju*».

for Baldr's death for her to release him. Just one refused to weep and it was a giantess sitting in a cave, *í helli*¹; Old Icelandic hella is a rock, like the Swedish word "*häll*". Liljenroth in his book *Hel – den gömda gudinnan* claims that Hel was from the beginning a mother giantess worshipped as a rock, *häll-hella*, and this is where her name derives from. Snorri might have been familiar

with this assumedly primitive rock-worship, as in the sagas authors preferably connected characters with certain objects or locations, just as they connected Gullveig with dark and deep forests in the mythos. Why this mysterious giantess in the rock-cave has the name Þökk, thanks, is for me an evidently ironic name for Hel to torment the gods a little extra with her morbid spectacle – a trait not far from her father's. My point is that I believe Hel was just messing around with the gods and Baldr, as she had the power to just say no when the gods asked for Baldr back.

*

*Þökk mun gráta þurru tárur Baldrs bálfarar;
kyks né dauðs nautk-a ek Karls sonar,
haldi Hel því, er hefir.*

*

Baldr has to suffer death and does not get the chance to return to life, now Gullveig and Loki have him exactly where they wanted him and by this the ragnarokian chain-reaction will follow. It is bit ironic that Óðinn, god of the dead, has to let his own son undergo eternal death, and Óðinn himself had no power to free his own son from it. Indeed, even though it is said that Óðinn is the “wisest one” and “knows all” – which includes the future (according to e.g. *Völuspá* and *Lokasenna*) – he lets Gullveig and Loki kill his own son and send him to the underworld where he has to live amongst giants. In the myths Óðinn grieves the most over his son, but still he just stood aside and let them kill him. This myth tells almost more about Óðinn’s foolishness than the killing of his son.

*

In my interpretation of this, either the ancient Scandinavian authors patronized the highest god, saying he is too oblivious to foresee the killing of his own son, or they were so haphazard themselves that they did not understand what they were saying in their own sagas.



II: Fjølkyngi



FOREWORD

This part of the book holds the esoteric aspects and praxis of my own workings of witchcraft in the line of what is called the Thursatru Tradition – Þursatrú siðr – and it divulges a small part of my magical Gullveig-workings. I share this black art as I know that it will benefit the rime-thursian power of Gullveig. I will not go into detail, merely give examples of good ways to work with Gullveig.

It must be remembered that these are my individual workings; the Old Norse tradition, Gullveig and Loki, together with my assorted sorcerous background have assisted me in developing my individual sinister path and tradition. Certain literature, traditions, and people have inspired me as well, and in that way helped me with *understanding* and enlightened my eclectic approach to a Gnostic Left Handed path.

What I present below in this part of the book I would call a pure inspirational text rather than a complete system that can be adopted just by anyone.

There are certain principles I consider important in a successful and resultant practice in the line of the Thursatru Tradition, and that is what I will put emphasis on in this chapter; I split my siðr into three:

Siðr – The Tradition

- *Blót* - Worship
- *Seta* - Meditation
- *Vitt* - Practical magic

THE ÞURSATRÚ SIÐR

Here I want to bring up in short the *Þursatrú* and *Jotnatrú*; anglicized to Thursatru and Jotnatru. I will focus more on the concept of Thursatru because it is more of a correct name for this line of religion, tradition and praxis, according to the Old Norse *fórnsiðr* (Old tradition: I rather call it *siðr* than *fórnsiðr* (with of course the full understanding of the essence of *fórnsiðr*), as this tradition should move on and expand, not stagnate in a previous era; that would be to fail the worship and witchcraft of our Old ancestors, which the siðr is built upon. They considered it to be vital for the next one to continue their *siðr*.) First I want to make clear that there

was no *Þursatrú* or *Jötnatrú* known in Old Scandinavia, these are modern names designed to point out the line of Old Norse religion, tradition and praxis – even though the foundation and essence of *Þursatrú* has an established tradition today.

Thursatru means basically the belief in thurses, it is the name of the workings with *þursar* (anglicized to thurses pl.), the whole of their religion, tradition and praxis. With the usages of the Old Norse plural form *þursar* it aims at the thursian powers, the true essences of the darker and adversary aspect of the giant-clans in the underworld as a whole. The essence of the thursian powers dwells as a whole in the *Þ*-rune, and this rune is the symbol of the entire Thursatru. Runic combinations known as bind-runes will only strengthen the *Þ*-rune's meaning and power and are used in many sundry ways; this is by the Old tradition – *fórnsiðr*. The *Þ*-rune itself holds both the *Þ*-rune and the *↑*-rune in *Þursa↑rú*, if you just take the top v-shaped figure of the t-rune and put it vertical on its stem, which makes the *Þ*-rune a perfect bind-rune or sigil for the body of *Þursatrú*. Indeed, to use the *Þ*-rune as a bind-rune it is all of a sudden a rune of *taufr*, which means sorcery or even a talisman, and this is what the *↑*-rune represents here: *taufr* as in non-static dynamic power of the cultus.

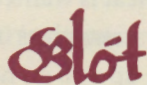
So what powers are we talking about, who is *þurs* and who is *jötunn*? Here I'll bring up a few *þursar* who all are of great importance: The primordial ur-thurs is *Ýmir* who is called by his own rime-thurs race *Aurgelmir*: the first of them all. «*En þaðan af komu ættir, það eru hrímþursar. Hinn gamli hrímþurs, hann köllum vér Ými*». He created *Þrúðgelmir* the six-headed thurs, *Bergelmir* was his son («*þa var Bergelmir borinn; Þrúðgelmir var þess faðir, enn Aurgelmir afi*».) Indeed, many more thurses were created from this race; many are mentioned throughout the mythology, mostly rime-thurses and adversaries to the *ásir*. *Loki* and *Gullveig* are two key characters in mythology and worship; both are thurses and eminent enemies with the *ásir*, probably two of the oldest thurses.

Their children are of course thurses: *Jörmungandr*, *Fenrir* and *Hel*; to my understanding and studies *Fenrir* belongs to the *Múspell*-race (like his father *Loki*) and *Hel* is chief-ruler of *Niflheimr* (of the *Nifl*-race like her mother *Gullveig*.) *Surtr* and all his sons of *Múspellzheimr* are thurses and they all have a very important role in the *Ragna Røk* mythos. *Þjazi* and his brothers *Iði* and *Gangr* turned into thurses after being betrayed by the *ásir*. *Niðhöggr* dwells in *Niflheimr*, the home of all rime-thurses. *Niðhöggr* and his breed are gnawing on the roots of the world-tree to poison it and kill it from within – this allegorizes the sole purpose of the thursian powers. *Beli* and his dog-headed clan belong to the rime-thurses, etc.

The Thursatru worship has its foundation in the underworld; Jötunheimr and Helheimr, and in Chaos; Niflheimr and Múspellzheimr. The anti-cosmic and sinister powers of Jötunheimr and Helheimr are worshipped as adverse entities. Equally, the rime-world in Chaos, Niflheimr, with its deformed and icy thurses, the world where Gullveig once walked out from and where her essence still dwells, and where Hel is the chief-ruler (Nifl-Hel) is worshipped as an acosmic and anti-cosmic *eitr*-current invading the cosmos. Múspellzheimr, also in Chaos, with its ruler Surtr is worshipped as the flaming world, where once Loki sprang out from. The worship is devoted to the thurses, to uphold them and sacrifice to them so that they will grow in power. The tradition that comes with this worship holds Old Norse rituals in many forms, a tradition that comes with devotion and black magical praxis. The practical sorcery of this tradition is very important and has been since ages before the Common Era. All of this is very important to respect. The rune-row is a central tool in the Thursatru Tradition, the calling for the powers includes it, and the black magical praxis is based on it and its mysteries. So therefore it is very important to *understand* all of the runes, its old language, and its usage – this is an essential part of the Thursatru tradition.

Jotnatru is the name based on the word *jötunn*, which is in analogy with the more benign giants who most often are friends with the *ásir*. It's very confusing in the Old sagas because many authors mix the words *þurs* and *jötunn* in sentences as if the words meant the same, but they do not. That is the main difference between *Þursatrú* and *Jotnatrú*, and this is why Jotnatru is an inappropriate name for a cultus opposing the *ásir*.





After the sun has gone down her power opens up akin to the eyes of the night-owl. She likes the dark of the night – the nightside of time – like her abode deep in the east of the underworld, where it is cold and dark, and where the Nifl-mists drift heavily. This is the time for calling her name and to give homage to her, and doing so she will come climbing from the depths and out of the earth to answer your call. She, the Old One comes as the old wise crone, and sits with you; leaning on her black staff of thursian power, a tool holding the very essence of Chaos' wrath. In her black robes she sits in delight of your devotion. She hungers for you and the essence of your offerings to her, she absorbs it like ravenous flames.

There it is, high upon a hill, the big rocks with heavy snow-caps look like giants are sitting and watching the stars in the night. This is the wilderness, no civilization close to these woods, no cars or filthy city noises. It is winter, and the long winter months are corresponding to Gullveig and her Nifl-blood. I consider the winters to be Gullveig's most dominant time of the year, especially Midwinter, which I see as one of the most important nights in homage to Gullveig, Hel and the Nifl-powers. The winter nights in my area are normally about -20°C to -35°C, a trait which helps you in feeling the cold of Niflheimr in your very own core. The trail which leads up to this place is old and only animals use it today. Brown bears and wolves are known to stroll in these woods – without fire you are a potential target for the wild beasts' curiosity, aggression, and hunting instincts. This knowledge makes you alert; as the adrenaline infecting your blood the motivation is infecting your spirit. Their presence can be felt as a lingering reek of their urine and fur, their essence dwells here but they themselves have run away as soon as they heard my car pulling up below the hill and smelled the smoke from my torch.

These woods are old, you can tell by the intensity of the entities dwelling here, the darkness is so thick it feels like it chokes you, but it is only the effect of its unseen presence, as the darkness here is like a thick fog, you can actually feel it embrace you. The tree giants are standing tall and murmuring in the non-present wind, they look like dark giant defenders protecting the primeval hill of the thurses. The edgy flames of my torch are dancing eagerly and cast shadows in the dark, the flames

make the wood come alive, and its heat is wanted in this rime-clad home. The deep snow and the up-hill trail tests your strength as it is like walking in water up-stream, it is like the snow wants you to give up and go home. But the very thought of what awaits you makes you not care about small distractions like this. As I arrive I first see them, the big rocks which are acting ritual monuments represent Loki, Gullveig and their adverse purpose, at the same time are they representing Jörmungandr, Fenrir and Hel. They are waiting patiently for the flames to rise again in their lair.

Thoughts on Gullveig and memories of my last visit going around in my head as I carefully stack the fire-wood in place in the fire-pit I once made by digging a big deep hole in the rocky ground, and I put large rocks around it to hold the flames. A long time ago I and some brothers made this place with just shovels and pick-axes; it took months of hard labor. And at last the flames lit up the giant rocks at the Gullveigarblót, “*Heil Gullveig!*” Specially gathered herbs and resin are mixed in the stone-mortar and the pestle roughly grinds the mix to nice incense granules. With my hand-made spoon – made out of Yew-tree and which has Gullveig-runes burnt into it – the incense mix is put on glowing charcoal with my left hand; “*Heil Gullveig! Heil Heiðr! Heil Aurboða!*” The smoke is well-known and awakes my spirit, a certain focus. Heavy breathing makes you dizzy and all of yourself getting warm and inspired. With my inner eye I envision Gullveig’s essence filling the darkness, my sigils and fetishes are activated and call for her, like howling wolves in a February night, mist is steaming from the jaws of the hunters, reeking and rising, the smoke comes from the underworld, from her abode, it is her essence, like the foul breath of Garmr. I fall into meditation, a preparation for the receiving of Gullveig’s presence. With my inner voice I call, materialize runes with my inner voice and cast them smoking and icy down into the depths of Járnsviðr. Semi-improvised and wordless rune-songs flow in my thoughts; celebrating and glorifying In Aldna. The void spreads like the black wings of Niðhöggr around me; I can feel the might of the abyss and the claustrophobic clasp. I can feel the freedom of my spirit ripping the shackles apart like the father of Fenrir. I have now awoken the anti-cosmic powers and they climb up from under the earth like black shadowy mists. The crystal fetish which is representing Gullveig’s heart is as cold as ice and bites my left hand as I devotedly touch it, the clay-pot which represents the well of thursian wisdom – Hvergelmir – is boiling with eitr and the black magical runes inscribed are now glowing bright bloody red. So does the master bind-rune *bursakross*, which is placed in the east together with the fetish Gullveig-idol. The black magical wand is held with both hands and used as a focal point of Gullveig’s influence as the words of power are uttered:

"Heil Gullveig:

heil Gullveig: heil gýgr seiðs ok svartra rúna:

heil Gullveig: undir ok á jörðu:

heil Gullveig: með nafnin Heiðr Angrboða Hyrrokin Aurboða:"

"Gullveig – The giantess of darkness from ór-Chaos!

I cast runes consecrated in your alluring name, burning and smoking, into the hungry arms of Myrkviðr; to seek to uphold your wise monstrosity."

"Gullveig – The thurs-powers' giantess from Járnsviðr!

See me from your mighty and black seiðr-throne; from the deepest darkness in which you dwell."

"Gullveig, I invoke you! Wise and old giantess!

I implore you to possess my spirit with your black and anti-cosmic power.

I implore you to take me as your disciple in the thursian knowledge and runes.

I implore you to embrace and infuse my devoted spirit with your thursian strength and rime-thursian wisdom."

"Gullveig, I invoke you! Wise giantess!

Let my rune-songs link your powers with mine; and bind my rune-songs to your black magic.

Let my rune-songs hail you as my dark and almighty queen."

"Hail Gullveig! Distributor of the words of darkness!"

"Þau hétu hana þrjár hræðilegar þursameyjar:

þursamærin sem er ein ok þrjár:

þrysvar brend: þrysvar borin:

mær ok félagi Loka: vørðr ok dróttning Myrkviðar:"

"Dróttning járnviðja, þursameyja, gýgja, myrkriða, illra brúða:

Dróttning járnulfa, þursarekka, jötna, svartblótmanna, illra vera:"

"heil Gullveig in vitra: heil Gullveig in aldna:"

I then open up and receive the attention from Gullveig, she always comes and sits with me, faceless she smiles at me and nods in approval and shows me that she is willing to share. For a long time I just sit as if meditating and studying Gullveig with my inner eye as she shows me things, things of importance, this could take an hour or two. Then, when the time is right I bring out my *Blótspánir*, they are my specially made divination tools – which I use to communicate with Gullveig above all. I call them my “claws” because they are made from genuine wolf claws, for me they symbolizes the restless wolf who stroll in the dark to scout out what he is looking for, no rest and no mercy. My claws have been through these journeys as they come from a wild wolf: they have hunted, they have killed, and they have devoured their victims. For me, what this represents in my workings is very important. They represent Gullveig’s child Fenrir and their offspring, e.g. Hati and Sköll; Gullveig leads them and they are enlightened by her: so am I, and they are very much connected to her and she has accepted my claws as a means to communicate.

After my communication and receiving I prepare and start my *Seta*; to gain all the understanding of what I have received this night. Then, I end my *blót* by giving sacrifice and praise Gullveig for all that she has given me. This night I brought my sacred bowl with red Gullveig-runes inscribed on it and I filled it with raw meat which swam in blood, something the Old One fancies. Even the Old One’s Járnvíðjur gather from the scent of fresh blood and meat, thirsting for its essence.

“Heil Gullveig! Heil Heiðr! Heil Aurboða!”

“Heil Gullveig in vitra! Heil Gullveig in aldna!”



Seta

Útiseta is a meditative technique that calls for a longer meditation out in the wild to connect with the divinities and exchange power and hidden knowledge. There is also the OI term *náttseta*, night-sitting, which might fit better with the workings according to the Thursatru tradition. But I just call this praxis *Seta*, sitting, as I use this form of invocatory meditation both outside and inside during nights. Some will probably disagree with this, as the known (modern) practice of *Útiseta* is particularly described as being performed outside in the wilderness. Well, I don't like to limit myself with predestined boundaries, such as stasis in praxis – even though I consider tradition highly important. Instead I use the fundamental ideology of the Gnostic Left Hand Path and thursian traditions with my personal lawless developments to form any praxis into the best adapt one for me – unrestrained. After more than a decade of experience of ON praxis, I figure that as long as I reach the purpose with this form of invocatory meditation I can adjust it to my individual practice and fulfillment.

In the line of Thursatru the point with *Seta* is for example to reach the depths of the underworld and grasp its knowledge, and/or during a ritual become one with the invoked thursian power – it could also be used as an extensive meditation to achieve understanding of previously received knowledge.

I often use incense during my *Seta* which I prepare and mix beforehand according to the type of working I'm doing. After all these years of praxis my brain are used to the incenses and connects its scents routinely with certain states. I use all kinds of herbs and resin to get certain scents. For inside-workings I rather burn oils, and these oils I make myself by mixing carrier oil (e.g. sweet almond oil), essential oils, herbs and resin till I get the scent I want. I think oil is better for inside *Seta* because it gives a more pleasant scent as you sit in front of it for a very long time, incense smoke tends to make you a bit too dizzy after a longer while because of the lack of oxygen in your brain, and you can get poisoned from it, too. Another bad thing with using incense on an inside *Seta* is that you have to refill it often, and that distracts your meditation. However, for outside *Seta* I always burn incense mixes on charcoal as it lasts for a long time, and to avoid distractions as I sit outside heavier doses of incenses are needed, so I always prepare 3-4 times of a batch.

Fetishes are very important to me, and they were very important in the ON magic. I always have several different fetishes for every single thursian power that I'm working with. All have their exact purpose. A fetish is an item that has been worked with for a long time, interlinked and "inspirited" with certain chosen powers. These items I always bring to my *Seta* sessions of course, as it is their purpose to work with you anytime and anywhere. Your fetishes are the links between your Will and your spirit; your magical praxis and the thursian powers. I behold them as my extended roots; which I have, by my controlled Will, descended into the underworld and connected with whatever power or source I wish.

The last item I regularly bring to the *Seta* is my black wand. It is my black serpent of power that stabilizes my black magical focus.

*

I have several places where I like to go and have my *Seta* and rituals; my two favorite places are one upon a mountain and one by a certain lake in the outskirts of my town. A thirty minutes car-ride and I arrive at this deserted lake. The water is absolutely still this cold night; it makes a perfect giant mirror, which reflects the black mountains and trees. Thick and heavy mists stroll slowly around the lake and between the trees, a sign that even colder weather is approaching due to the cloudless night sky. The darkness is bluish as the full moon's sharp light illuminates it, it is something very magical with the blue darkness, and it reminds me of Hel's spirit, Gullveig's deathly daughter. As my beard and fingertips start to freeze I make a fire on a natural made shore by the lake; the shoreline is very narrow, perfect though for a fire and room for me and my ritual belongings. The flames soon give me warmth and the ground gives me cold, it has an odd effect upon me, something I cannot experience inside a house. I always start by having a short and relaxing meditation, to calm down and to blend in with this rare nocturnal outside environment. It takes time to get used to all the wilderness sounds, and at the same time I have to get used to the awkward silence. Unusual, silence can be a distraction. After I feel that I am one with the night I place out my ritual items, everything has its place and I need it that way. I put the mortar in my knee and start to grind my gathered herbs and resin with the pestle in my left hand into a rough mix to nice incense granules, this night I used dried Mistletoe and Myrrh resin as a base. With the hand-made spoon made of Yew-tree I put the incense mix on glowing charcoal with my left hand and utter: "*Heil Gullveig! Heil Heiðr! Heil Aurboða!*" I started to evoke the powers of Niflheimr with the help of Gullveig, and I can see with my inner eye how

everything around me freezes over and how darkness and ice springs up from the below. Icy mists surround me and the area where I sit embraces me like darkness. I feel the presence of the rime-thurses, and Gullveig nods at me with a content stature. Then I powerfully thrust my black wand into the ground so that its poisonous snake-head digs deep down in the black earth, at the same time I proclaim my will and start to say my runic formulae in my head. The Nifl-powers are already alert and meet my wand's head underground and grasp it as an ally. I mentally envision rime biting and embracing my black wand like crystallized smoke, even my hands and arms covers with rime until my wand and my body is covered by this Nifl-hue. Then I stay there, in that state, just gazing into the rime-thursian abyss. Sometimes I spiritually dive into the dark void of the underworld and sometimes I stay semi-conscious and communicate with the powers.



Gullveigar Rúnar

GULLVEIG'S RUNES & THE BLACK RUNES

This is a text which I have compiled along with my other book URAM, but this text focuses only on runes which are related to the runic Gullveig-workings. Some runes are only for Gullveig, and other are vital in any black thursian magical practice. These runes belong to a tradition and should be treated thereafter.

Within the thursian tradition Thursatru, the runes with a thursian purpose are called black, the runes came from the giants and their runic wisdom belongs to them. From a thursian perspective the runes are black magical practical tools of communication and understanding of hidden knowledge – the giants are communicating through the runes to you. This night-side knowledge is represented in the adjective *black* in black runes. And this night-side knowledge comes from the wrathful blood of the giant-race *purs*. The thursian race is the black current of Chaos which invades the cosmos; symbolized as the black dragon with eleven heads, or Hvergelmir with its eleven black heads. This anti-cosmic poison is an allegory for the hidden knowledge or communication that the thursian powers bring through the Upark rune-row allegorized as *black light*. All runes of the Upark rune-row originate from the primordial thurses; as a matter of fact they were created by Gullveig – the thursian giantess who invented witchcraft and the runes. Her black essence is entwined in the craft and the runes, as Ymir's black blood in the creation.

My understanding of the Upark rune-row and the runic practical magic has its foundation in the anti-cosmic Satanic tradition, and the Chaos-Gnostic tradition. This does not mean that I have made up my own runes and meanings; it means that I have embraced the thursian aspects of the runes and their magic, I have embraced the Old lore and inventions, developed it with modern and personal expansion. I am very careful to not neglect the Old lore and traditions; I rather sieve out the *purs*-aspects and uphold it in my black thursian magic and tradition.

I have studied and worked with runes for many years now, and I have gained understanding in the depths of the runes by exploring them exoterically and esoteri-

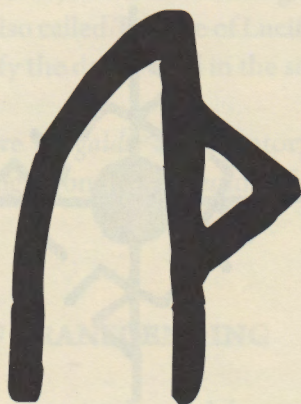
cally. I pretty much read everything I can get my hands on when it comes to runes, everything from Scandinavian history, runology, to modern rune-magic books. I must say that old runological texts interest me the most, because of their undefiled knowledge. They may hold a lot of scientific speculations and guesses because of the runes' poor evidential history, but at least their authors do not make up fictional groundless reports. Many modern texts and books are overlooked hypotheses made up from "authors'" fantasies of a "lord of the rings" reality, which never existed. So I can proudly say that I have based my rune-theories on credible sources from known and respected runologists, scientists and authors, and from that I have worked and experimented by myself with the runes in magical and ritualistic praxis for many years – forming a personal black magical *svartrúnsiðr* following the anti-cosmic tradition.

To interpret the runes in an anti-cosmic way is not easy and it does not mean just looking at runes as some black magical tools. First, you have to have deep understanding in the anti-cosmic tradition and paths, and this is nothing you receive during a month of reading some books, this takes years of eclectic praxis – *lectita et scribe, antiquum novumque*. Secondly, you have to *understand* the runes. So this text is my personal outcome from many years of understanding of the black side of the runes and their thursian magic.

More detailed and compiled texts about the runes and their magic you will find in my next book URAM in the chapters "Black Runes" and "Black Rune Mastery".

rúnir er þursum komum fyr niðrhel neðan

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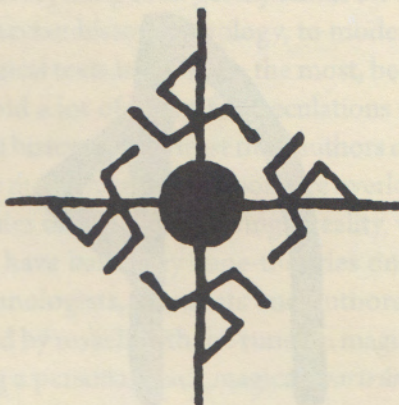
ÚRKAOS

The first and most important rune is a bind-rune which I call *Úrkaos* (primordial Chaos), and it is a combination between the þ-rune which in thursian magic represents the origin of the primordial powers or current of Ginnungagap or Chaos. The u-rune is a rune representing *origin* and the *original source*. The second rune is the þ-rune which in thursian magic holds all of the thursian power; which means everything that the essence and race of thurs stand for (*purs étt*). By now we can agree upon that it is the thursian power which is the anti-cosmic current originating from Ginnungagap or Chaos. I will investigate these two runes individually in my book URAM for a more detailed understanding.

þ holds both the aspects of þ and þ, and as a combination it represents the adverse power-current which came out of Chaos and became anti-cosmic as an alien cosmic power.

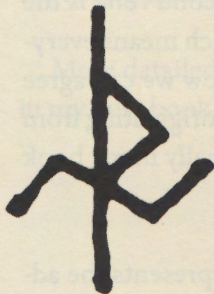
þ represents the primordial thursian current; the anti-cosmic current; the original essence of the purs-powers.

The þ bind-rune is a central symbol which should be used in all that involves practicing the black magical workings of the thursian powers, whether it's Gullveig, Loki or Surtr workings. This bind-rune connects them all and is more of a foundation of the thursian workings. It is used as a central talisman on the altar or in the *blót*-area, preferably hanging or standing in the center as a symbol of honor and leadership. This mighty bind-rune stands before the giants themselves.



BURSAKROSS

The powers of Chaos, which are represented by the anticlockwise movement, will re-invoke everything to its origin: Ginnungagap – The Abyss – Chaos.



Another, as important rune, is the bind-rune which I call *Bursakross* (the thurses' cross, or the thursian cross.) The *Bursakross* has the thursian purpose of invoking the mighty powers of Chaos, which are represented by the anticlockwise movement, to re-invoke everything within the cosmos to its origin: Ginnungagap – The Abyss – Chaos. *Bursakross* is the fundamental symbol of the *anti*-sunwheel, hence the four >-runes which sitting on the four reverse þ-runes which are representing the anticlockwise movement. This is the black sun-wheel that goes backwards and bringing everything back to its origin in Chaos. It is the symbol of Ragna Røk. The bind-rune above (þ and >) is the Surtian Chaos-power Focus rune, a rune I use very often too.

Within *Bursakross* you see the þ-rune: an important notation of the þ-rune is that it holds within itself several important runes in analogy with the *Bursatrú* belief: 1) the |-rune; belonging to Nifelheimr and its ruler Hel, and also the *hrímgygr* Gullveig, 2) the <-rune; belonging to Loki; and it represents the black light and gnosis, and 3) the >-rune; belonging to Múspellzheimr and its ruler Surtr.

The black point in the middle symbolizes Ginnungagap, the jaws to the acosmic Chaos. The jaws or portal is also called The Eye of Lucifer, The Eye of Taniniver and The Black Sun, and can signify the dark portal in the sigil of Azerate¹.

Pursakross is also an active *rúngaldr*; an evocatory sigil, made from bind-runes, calling upon the hastening of Ragna Røk or the Day of Wrath.

¹ See Temple of the Black Light, 2002, *Liber Azerate*.

THE FOCAL POINT OF TRANSCENDING

Transcending in this context means to go beyond; beyond the boundaries and causality of the cosmos. The *Pursakross* as an anti-sunwheel is the focal point and sigil which will lead your acosmic and black spiritual flame back through the black gaping jaws of Ginnungagap. The *Pursakross* is the wheel that spins anticlockwise and it spins like a spiral more than a circle, because its purpose is not limited as a closed circle; instead it is as lawless and acausal as the pandimensional Chaos.

In my Chaos-Gnostic belief and spiritual workings I view my spirit is being linked to the Úrkaos, and its essence being acausal – as my spirit has been burnt by the acausal Múspell-flames and bitten by the Nifl-ice; and by this enlightened and awakened from the hylic slumber; and by so opened my pneumatic eyes. I have identified karma – I will now assiduously strive to rise above karma – and from this, work to spiritually transcend back into Chaos. With this *Self*-knowledge I have the advantage to aim my spiritual workings and reach out to powers that can guide me to my objective. So I uphold the sigil *Pursakross* over my black altar and make it into a gateway to Ginnungagap. That's what the black point in the center of the sigil represents: the gaping chasm called Ginnungagap and Chaos.

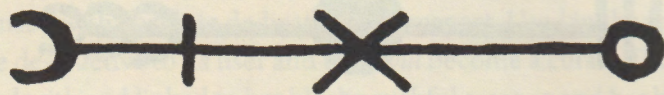
As I stare with my inner eye upon the *Pursakross* I envision it to be black, flaming and icy – it turns slowly and heavily anticlockwise in a spiral-way, absorbing my focus into its center – its black hole. In my visions it looks like a gigantic axel pulling in my black flames; seeking to connect its own overwhelming black flames with mine; as I call for the crone to watch over me; as I call for the light-bringer to guide me; as I call for Chaos to embrace my spirit.

Pursakross correspondences:

Chaos, anti-cosmic gods, thursian powers and their purposes, Satanic elements in the Old Norse religion, all-devouring fire, incineration of all forms, carbonization,

volcanic power; outburst and destruction, black fire and flames, Surtr and Surtr's sons, Surtr's burning sword of vengeance, Niðhøgg's purpose and entity, concentration, discipline, self-control, fire-meditation, mental strength, unconquerable, fight, perspicacity, unbreakable purposefulness, creativity, inventiveness, elitism, total victory, Satanic triumph, superiority, earned honor, greediness, Satanic and glorifying reward, respectability and dignity, unlimited wisdom – unlimited strength. **Gimsteinn:** Lava Stones, Lignite, Hematite, Onyx, Obsidian and Blood-stone.

Carve the *Bursakross* in stone, clay, bone or wood, paint on leather or paper/parchment, paint with bodily fluids on your body. Blood shall fill the rune, sperm or saliva if you wish it to be invisible.



ANDAGIPT

For continuous inspiration in my workings I use this stave, which is called *Andagipt*. As cosmic forces are all around us and naturally go against our choice of sinister path, physically and spiritually, I chose to always surround myself with strengthening tools. Such as this stave *Andagipt*, the gift to your spirit; the stave which will always make sure that no intruding force can defeat my dedication and loyalty. This is not a protection, this is empowering of your Self and your black magical work. *Andagipt* represents your Satanic will.

If you chose to work with this stave you need to come up with a fitting galdr song to it, to activate this stave in your personal workings.



GAUMI

Gaumi is the bind-rune or the stave which helps you to keep focus on the enlightenment given from the Chaos-powers. I use this stave in most of my magical runic workings, for example, to stabilize my focus on my aim and true ambition. Burn it into the black skin which you throw your divination chips on, cut it into your magical wand and fill it with blood, carve it into your altar, draw it onto your left hand before magical acts, embellish it into the leather pouch which holds black magical herbs, fetishes and gems, etc.

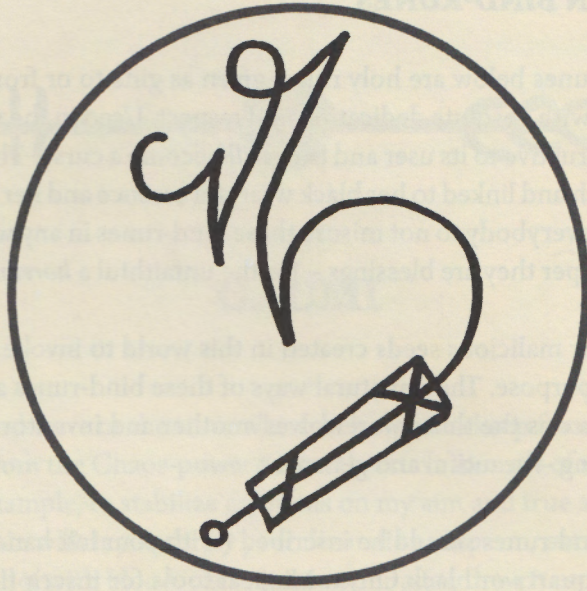
If you chose to work with this stave you need to come up with a fitting galdr song to it, to activate this stave in your personal workings.

GULLVEIGIAN BIND-RUNES

The three bind-runes below are holy runes given as gifts to or from Gullveig and can *only* be used with absolute dedication and respect. Used in the wrong way they will become destructive to its user and they *will* become a curse! These bind-runes are energized with and linked to her black wrathful essence and her blackest magic, so it's crucial for everybody to not misuse these bind-runes in any way. For the true Gullveig-worshipper they are blessings – for the unfaithful a *horrible* curse.

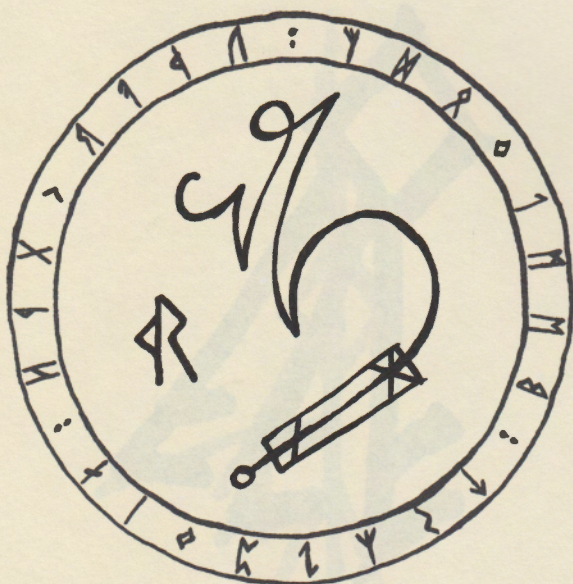
They are all her malicious seeds created in this world to invoke her and spread her essence and purpose. The unnatural ways of these bind-runes are as unnatural as her own essence as the thurs-werewolves' mother and inventor of magic: ferocious and attacking – beautiful and generous.

All of these bind-runes should be inscribed (with your left hand *only*) with ice, blood, a crystal quartz or black Onyx. Magical tools for inscription should be a charged poisonous wand, wolf-claw, icicle, or crystal quartz/black onyx-pointer. If carved, they should be carved with your left hand into fitting material.



KEMIR

Kemir is a bind-rune which evokes Gullveig's limitless knowledge and understanding of the runes. This sigil has always been on my altar and I constantly keep it there to help my spirit to be aided in the complex understandings of the runes' essence.



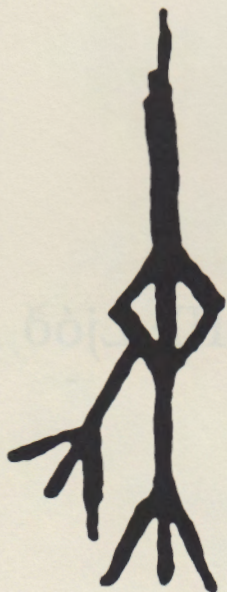
This is an alternative way to use *Kemir* in Upark rune-magic. The bind-rune made out of 𐌿 and 𐌷 helps your magical purpose to focus on the thursian aspects and it is also guidance in the depths of the underworld. The Upark-runes are written anti-clockwise to emphasize the will and path of Chaos.



LYKIL

Lykil is Loki within Gullveig.

Only Gullveig herself can explain its meaning and purpose.



ÍSARN

Ísarn is the bind-rune which evokes the current of Járnsviðr. It calls for the Old One and her thursian werewolf breed.

III: Ljóð

Hennar

*As darkness she came
Like a shadow out of shadows
a black crone with a black flame*

*Old, wise and all-seeing
She took the worlds in her grip,
prevailing against them as a rime-being*

*The ice-cold current then woke
And the gods knew
she would outlast fire and smoke*

*And spawned the serpent and the bane
And giants and wolves
and the gods knew they will be slain*

*Runes she brought from her own abyss
And the blackest magic
which no god dare to reminisce*

*All fear her as the Old mother
The Death which will embrace them
one after another*

*As the mother of the pale queen she came
Three in number – cold in essence
Unleasher of the untame*

*Anger she loves – squirming unlight
Like earth she consume and like space she is
Cunning and bright*

*Her magic is the keeper of the grave-worm
Abysmal – dark – death-striking
Iron firm*

*Black moon water colors her dress
Pockets that hold an ocean
Depthless*

*Under man's foundation she dwells
Seering – striving – reflecting
Underneath the wells*

*Do you know the crystal cave?
Where the seed of three spirits live
The mother stave*

*Do you know the hidden iron gate?
Unnatural dimensions rule behind it
Rime and hate*

*Of her name do not ask me
"Ages of Wolves" they call her
I call her SHE*

Ýblótrúnað

An anti-cosmic traditional rungaldr to
supplicate the Yew tree, its spirits and the ÍhwaR-rune.

ýr – íhwaR:
gró með Helju:
ek hylli anda ýs ok herulfa:

ýr – íhwaR:
gró með eitri:
ek hylli anda ýs ok þursulfa:

ýr – íhwaR:
gró með myrkri:
ek hylli anda ýs ok heiðulfa:

gró í Gullveigar nafni
gró fræ Hyrrokinjar:

ýr – íhwaR:
ýandar ek kalla:
ek heiti ýs anda at mæla mér satt
ok at leiða mik í myrkri ok rúnum:

ýr – íhwaR:
ýandar ek kalla:

gró í Gullveigar nafni
gró fræ Hyrrokinjar:

ýr – íhwaR:
ek hylli helulfar:
ek hylli heiðulfar:

Heldrasill:
ek virði þik:
ek fórna þér blóði:

ýr – íhwaR:
lát drekann með ellifu hofuð
frá Útgardi fóða þik:

The Old Will climb

*In the sinister night I call
Under the obsidian star
And with my myrrh resin I color the air
In your shadowy name
Black wax carries my blessed torch
Flames of a falcon-spine wander in my thoughts
I see the companion luring grimly
Eyes of a predator thrust me like a spear
But it gives me joy, not wounds
And there, tall and black she rose
Ice holds the moment with us in darkness
Sharing, showing, taking
And she moves, like an old tree in the wind
As her hands are of black icicles
As her hair is long and of black ice
Her face picks me up like a mother her child
Into a caress of the deepest shadow
And she speaks with runes of iron
Burning into my spirit
The great snake shall now come
Black within and like you without
Poison is frozen in its form
And Will is manifested upon my grip
Thrust it into the underworlds she said
And the old will climb*

Gránautr

Hungry he bays as he hunts in the sky
 The unnatural entity from a land of shadows
 Drooling like a rain-storm without a sky
 The one with dried blood on his fur, reeking
 Chasing the black swaying in the cold black sky
 It's an unconquerable game with a predestined end
 Mother, don't your children gather there?
 Mother, isn't that your abode?
 Black, lonely, blocker of the round fire
 Cold, haunting, keeper of the threshold of worlds
 He has been hunting it as an infant
 He has been hunting it as the mighty horn
 He has been hunting it as the shady eye
 Snapping, growling, crying
 Crying like winds caressing the shaded crowns of trees
 Sadness I hear – victory I seer
 O' mother of darkness, enlighten me as your grey and unleashed companion

Áma

*Hail, hail, hail!
Gullveig; first-born mother
Bringer of adverse power
Queen-Giantess of darkness*

*Hail, hail, hail!
Heiðr; second-born crone
Bringer of sinister dreams
Women's true luster*

*Hail, hail, hail!
Aurboða; third-born maid
Bringer of ascending seeds
Eclipse of the cosmic sun*

*Blackness I call your throne
The gaping space in Chaos
From where you shine through all worlds*

*Robes I witness flutter
As you rise like an icy night sky
With your wand like Chaos' axis*

*Queen of the wrathful giants
Below, upon and in the middle
Mother of the deathly race*

*Sallow earth you trample
And blacken it with your breath
Wordless darkness begets*

*To man you came as a crone
Proud in vigorous spirit
With light from the world below*

*As Queen over abysmal lands
And Queen over man and woman;
Queen-witch over the essence of magic*

*As two you first came
Sootless darkness and pure light
The ocean, the soil, and the below*

*As three you came before the powers
As a wintry cloud of bewilderment
Dominant, prevailing, and cruel*

*Blackness lick the soil of heaven
Terrible shadows pound on its walls
The first time you eclipsed its room*

*Wholesome like from the chasm you came
Unfolding like the infinite rebound
Dynamic as the fertile jaws*

*Keeper of the first race
Mother of its line
Queen-giantess*

*Source of the blackest poison
Holder of the fate
Key to the rim*

*Maid, mother, crone
Three in all aspects*

↑ ↑ ↑

Skasleikr

The giants stood dark

Deep in the valley

Still as January snow

Silence

Cold

I looked around

Old paths crossed my view

And a rabbit's left paw came

Triggered the witch

And she came as the crone

Black and frightening

Numerous links ran around her spine

Around and around

She spun like a wolf

But the black stretched out

Like spikes

Like icicles

Like iron rods

Darker she grew

Lighter I grew

She envisioned for us both

The vortex is the wand

The wand is the spine

And the spine holds the links

Like iron-talons they swept

Around like dead and falling leaves

But the spine is everlasting

Like a spiral in the abyss

And him
Swept the valley like a shadow

And she spun
Happy and alluring
The runes danced in the bats' field
Amulets she said
Are the floating good
In my dance and gaze
Gaze and incantation
Incantation and thirst
Thirst and hunger
Hunger, hunger

You shall collect
Manifold is better
Let them embrace your neck
Like a scarf in the cold
Touching your breast
Like my long hair
Burning intense
Glowing in knowledge
My word in one rune
Shall make you descend
In my home blend
In my house stay
With my hound bay
In my heart dwell
Me and Hel

I do it for you
Look at me
Bare
Wanting
Hungry
Spinning
Snapping
Biting
Teaching

Taking
Giving
Embracing
Lusting

I do it for you
Look at me
Bare black
Crone-dance
Black spike wheel
Confusing
Pulling
Fulfilling
the charm

Creating
the
deformed
desire

Appendix

I do not include all worlds in the ON cosmology of the mythology in this chart, as they are not relevant in this book.

- The darker outer part of the illustration is Chaos/Kaos, I have written it anti-clockwise because of its opposite nature towards the cosmos.

- N, E, S, W stands for the cardinal points; North, East ...

- The world tree and its worlds lie within the cosmos/Allheimr, I have shaped it as an egg, please do the same. The cosmos is surrounded by Chaos.

- The world tree is a Yew tree; please look up Yew tree on the net to get a good understanding of its shape, I like the world tree to look like a Yew tree. I will add a picture of a Yew tree that I like.

- Ásgarðr lies in the crown of the Yew tree.

- Miðgarðr lies on the Yew tree's trunk.

- The "upper" Jötunheimr lies to the north of/in Miðgarðr, above the underworld. It has a gateway down to the underworld.

- The underworld starts at the roots of the Yew tree. Mark the border with a horizontal line.

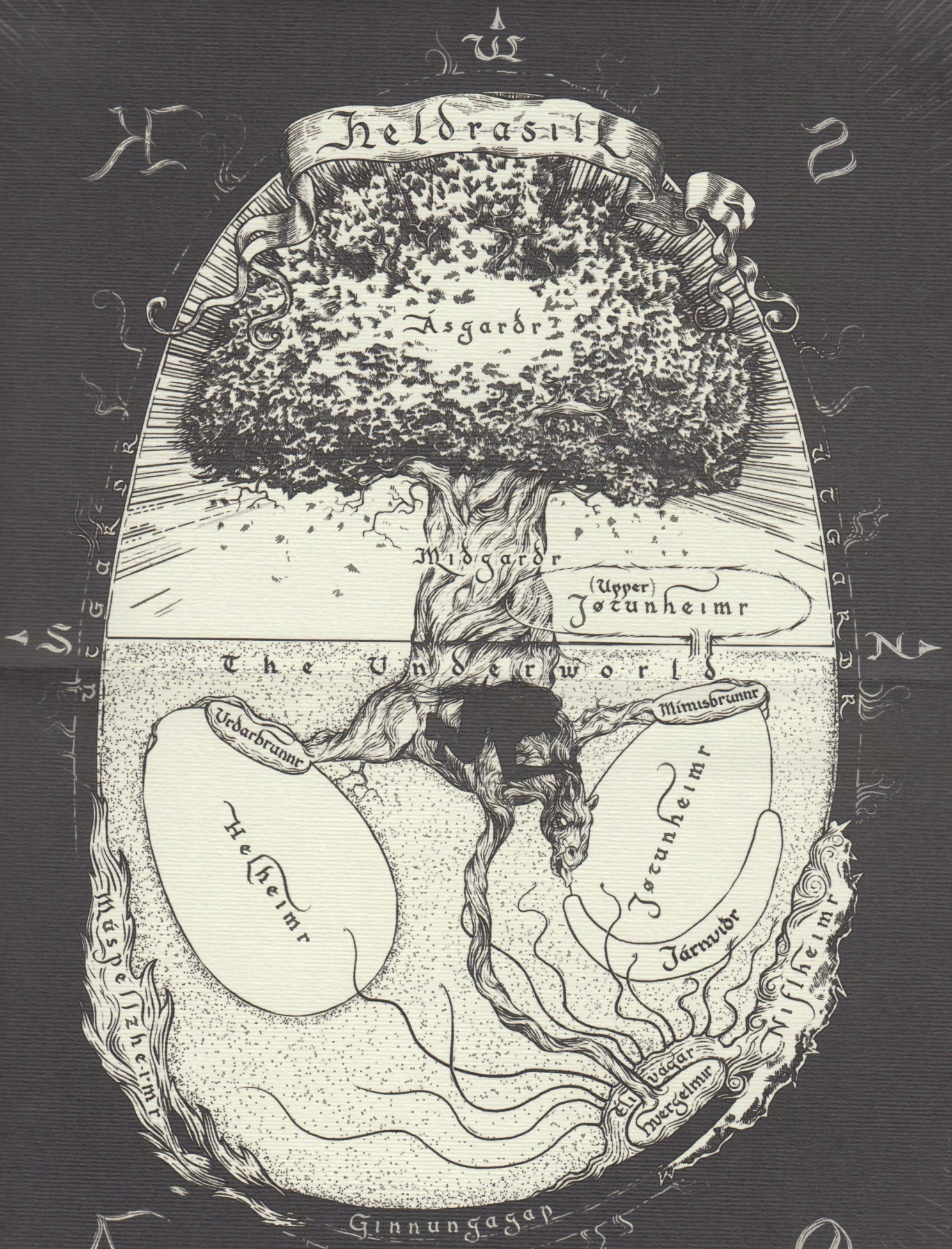
- To the North lies Jötunheimr, I like the form to be like an egg or a testicle. On top of Jötunheimr lies first well of wisdom; Mímisbrunnr, and the first Yew tree root leads to it. Under Jötunheimr to the East/North lies Járnsviðr.

- To the South lies Helheimr, I like the form to be like an egg or a testicle. On top of Helheimr lie another well of wisdom; Urðarbrunnr, and the third Yew tree root leads to it.

•Below these two underworldly worlds lies Ginnungagap, the black portal out to Chaos. Ginnungagap, Niflheimr and Múspellzheimr all lie in Chaos; that's why I've put them on the border between Chaos and the underworld.

•Niflheimr lies on the North side of Ginnungagap, Niflheimr is the world of ice and mists. And in Niflheimr the last well of wisdom lies; Hvergelmir, and the second Yew tree root leads to it. And on the outer rim of Hvergelmir lies the "sea-shore" called Élivágar, and from Élivágar runs 11 rivers which are spreading throughout the underworld, feeding Jötunheimr, Helheimr, the roots etc with their poisonous waters.

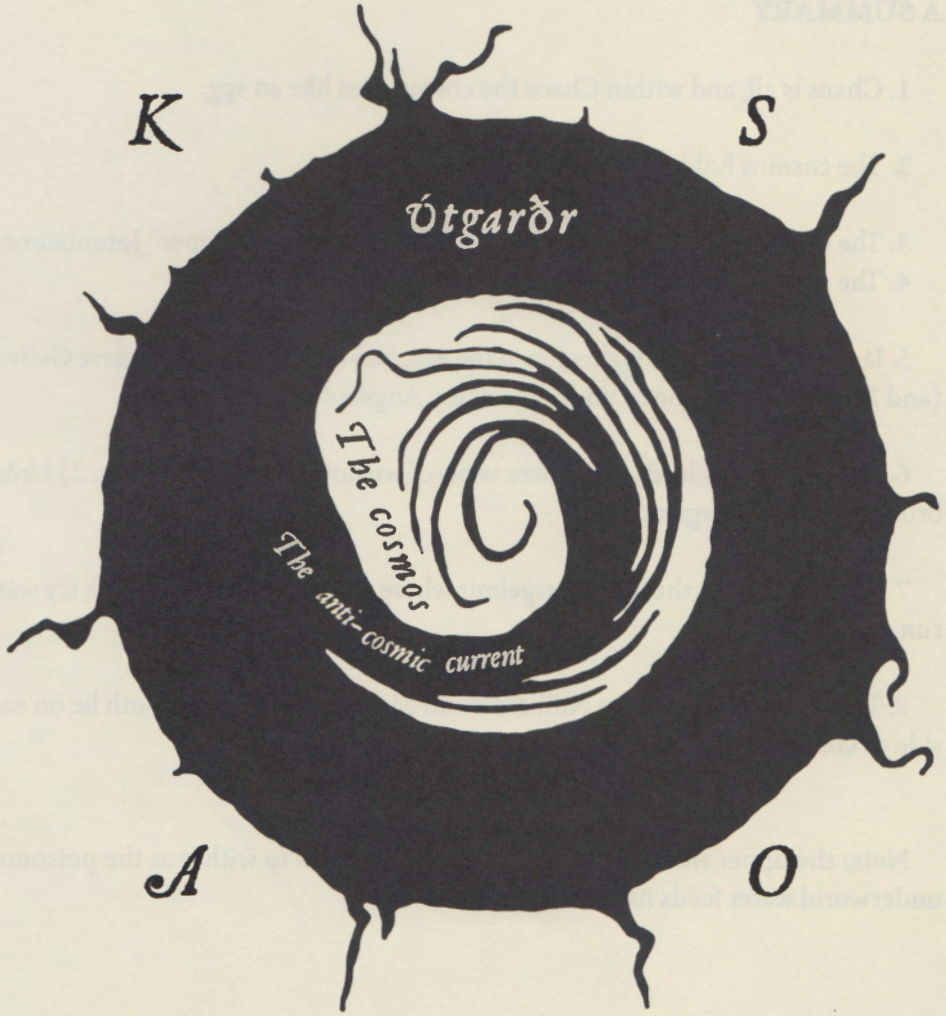
•Múspellzheimr lies on the South side of Ginnungagap, Múspellzheimr is the world of flames.



A SUMMARY

1. Chaos is all, and within Chaos the cosmos lies like an egg.
2. The cosmos holds the world tree and its worlds.
3. The upper worlds are: a) Ásgarðr, b) Miðgarðr, and c) “upper” Jötunheimr.
4. The underworld includes: a) Jötunheimr, and b) Helheimr.
5. Járnnviðr (ironwood) is a region in the east/north of Jötunheimr where Gullveig (and Fenrir) has her abode under the name Angrboða.
6. The three roots lead to the three wells of wisdom: 1) Mímisbrunnr, 2) Urðarbrunnr, and 3) Hvergelmir.
7. Élivágar is a sea-shore at Hvergelmir where 11 rivers of Hvergelmir’s icy water run out.
8. The worlds in Chaos are Niflheimr and Múspellshheimr. They both lie on each side of Ginnungagap.

Note: the upper world, hence the tree-crown, starts to wither as the poisonous underworld water feeds its roots.



A simple illustration of how Chaos' acosmic current invades the cosmos and transforms into being anti-cosmic